

Love Letters of a Rookie to Julie eBook

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Page 1

Title: Love Letters of a Rookie to Julie

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*** Start of this project gutenberg EBOOK love letters of A rookie to Julie ***

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LOVE LETTERS

OF A

ROOKIE

TO JULIE

BY Barney Stone

Headquarters Co., 119 F.A. A.E.F.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GORDON ROSS

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To—

R.E.S., whose Suggestions made these pages possible and palatable.

[Illustration: *Me on guard*]

DERE JULIE



In camp (Somewhere between the Kitchen and the lunch counter).

Dere Julie,

Well, hear I am in camp after being “rough-housed on the rattlers” for 1 day and 2 nites; I was so shook-up that I’m like a loose button on an overcoat—no wheres in particular.

The most vivid impression in my bean is our interview in the hall-way of your flat the night (or was it morning) when we bid each other a fond fare-thee-well. Never will I forget them tender and loving words you spoke, also will I remember them words spoke, by the guy on the second floor, *not* so tender; how was we to know you were backed up against the push button of his bell? When a boob like him lives in a flat in wartime he ought to be made to muffle his bell after 10 p.m. I’m gonna rite the Pres. about this.

Our going away was some deeparture; I’ll bet a small piece of change that every fair young damsel on the block was present—and some damsels not so young and fair. The old maid who grabbed onto me had seen about 40 summers and heavings knows how many winters; she was so crosseyed that if she had pulled a weep the tears would have run down the back of her neck. It was her last chance to grab a man and believe you me, she made use of the opportunity.

Well angel face, here I am a buck private fur fair, but believe you me, I’d rather be a private with a chicken on my knee than a kernel with an eagle on my shoulder; and I’d rather have any shoulder on a bar than a bar on my shoulder any time.

Yours loving dough-boy,

Barney.

P.S.—I don’t know why they call us dough boys, for thirty per aint much “dough,” is it angel face?

[Illustration: “How wuz I to know you wuz agin the push button of his bell.”]



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Same Camp.

(Not on the map.)

Dere Julie,

Many thanks, my cherrie (that's French), fur the lovely cake you sent me, but believe you me deary, I didn't get a smell of it. I got the box about 6 p.m. opened it at 6;01, and at 6;011/2 our band played the Star Spangled Banner and all us fellows had to stand at attention; by the time they had finished, our company mascot, a billy goat camouflaged with a bunch of whiskers and an unshaven glue factory breath gobbled the whole blooming business.

Speaken of eats, the Gov't certainly comes across with the gorging. That is, there's plenty of it, but the "maynew" is not as long as a search warrant. But O, my kingdom for a plate of ham and eggs. Ham is scarcer here than at a Jew wedding feast, and as for eggs, there ain't no sich thing in the world. I think that some of Bill of Berlin's ginks in this country have been hanging up birth control "info" in every hen house in the U.S. least ways sumpin has happened to corner the market.

Well, deary, far be it from me to say how long this war will last. I got a scheme to end it, so I'm gonna spill it to you, and here she is; Lock Theo. Roosevelt and his three sons in the same room with William the Twicer and his seven sons; whichever cums out at the end of an hour wins the war. You bet when this cums off I'll hold a ticket on Theo. Well honey bunch, I had a lovely dream last eve, I dreamed that you and me was holding down a park bench, with not a cop in sight. I had just taken you in my arms, and touched your ruby lips, when I suddently awoke to find the captain's pet sausage hound was licking my nose. Some day there's gonna be a first class dog funeral in this camp and that lop-eared canine is gonna ride in the head wagon.

It's so cold down here that if a guy wanted a hair cut all he'd haft to do would be to wet his hair, leave his hat off, and break off the icicles, More Anon.

Yours until Lillian Rustle retires,

Barney.

P.S.—I'd rather be a lamp post on Broadway, than a ten story building down here.

[Illustration: "The Captin's pet sausage hound wuz lickin' my face."]

In Camp C, W and H.

(Meaning cold, wet and hungry.)



Dere Star of My Heart,

Big day for us; we got our new soldier scenery—a complete set from kicks to skypieces. Did you ever see a feather bed with a string tied around the middle, or a bale of hay with the middle hoop busted? That’s what my appollonnaris form looks like now draped in the togs handed me by the “land of the free and the home of the brave.” The pants must have been cut out with a circular saw for a bow-legged simp. I have to use a compass to find out which direction I’m going, and believe you me when I caught sight of “yours truly” in a mirror I looked like the end of a load of wood and just as handsome.



Page 3

These clothes remind me of the tailors sign on eur block, "A. *Levinsky, first class Tailor*. Wear a suit of our clothes and you will have a fit." I am liable to have several fits before I get acquainted with 'em. If I could rent out the extra room, I could buy "makins" for a month. They call 'em fatigue uniforms, and believe you me they called 'em right—one look at 'em makes you tired. The only things that fit are the hat cord and collar ornaments.

You know how it is with me Julie nothing ready made fits me but a hanky.

After studying the directions, I managed to make 'em hang on me. I was so interested in 'em that on my way over to the barracks, I failed to salute a major who passed; he grabbed me amid ships with one hand and pointed to his shoulder with the other; my mind bein on clothing scenery instead of salutin, I piped up, You got no kick comin, look what they handed me.

Me and Skinny Shaner got on the outside of about a 1/2 dozen pickled pigs feet last night at the canteen and finished off with about a quart of ice-cream apeace. Along about a hour or so afterwards during the mixing process, I guess the pigs feet got cold in the ice cream and commenced to kick. Skinny was doubled up so he looked like a horse shoe bend on a scenic railroad. I suggested that we each take a dose of Allen's Foot Ease, as I heard that helped sore feet, but Skinny balked; he always was stubborn like that. Finally, we sent in a three alarm for a doc.

[Illustration: "You got no kick comin'—look what they handed me."]

He asked us what we'd been eatin; we couldn't give up anything, otherwise we'd have "give up" the pigs-feet, so the Doc. Allowed we had the appende-come-and-get-me. That's about as near to the truth as the Docs usually gets. If you're laying at death's door they generally pull you thru. The Doc said "operation at once" but havin read Irve Cobb's book about Operations I passed the buck to Skinny and we both got better simultaneously to once. I don't jest "make" this appendicitis but I have a suspicion that's its a disease that costs about \$500.00 more than the stummick ache; anyhow its sumpin you have just before your Doc buys a new automobile. All the samee, we're off pigs feet fur life.

Yrs in Health

Barney.

P.S.—I left my other shirt at the "chinks" to be laundered. Don't let him sell it for charges before I get back.

Dere Julie,



At last I am a officer; and it happened like this. To make my old lady feel good, and knowin she didn't know much of the "parley-voov" spoke in the army, I rote her that I had been made a Captain in the Latrines; this A.M. i gets a "billy-doo" from her asking me, now that I had got to be a high up officer, not to be too hard on the boys under me, and to always remember that I was once a buck private in the rear ranks. I hope the old lady don't think to look the word up in the dictionary, or she might, as Laura Blue Jeans Libby says "be rudely awakened." Eh What?



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An instructor today was wising us up on overseas service, and told us the best way to rough house cooties; he didn't show us any of the pets, but did show us the scratch proof dug-outs they had made on his frame. From the way he described 'em and their habits, I imagine they are the same species of "seam squirrels" that you get in a Coney Island bathin suit. The first time you go to Mrs. Woolworth's store please buy and send me a 1/2 dozen graters so I can rent 'em out to the boys to scratch on. That's me. In time of piece prepare for war.

I see by the papers that Uncle Sam says the Kings must be thrown out. Believe you me, he must be some poker player to throw out 3 kings and make a hand win.

Skinny Shaner got in dutch today at drill. We had been drillin for a hour or so, and the command was, Company forward march! Halt! This was kept up continuously fur about a hour, and all to wunce Skinny trowed down his gun and said he'd be d—— if he would be bossed by a guy like that, he changed his mind to d—— often. Skinny is always like that. Ever since he's been here, he's been braggin what a fine singer he is; said his voice was trained for Grand Opera. He sang for us last night, a song, entitled "God give us cheap ice, for Heaven's knows we have cheap skates." Believe you me, his voice was trained for Grand Rapids instead of Grand Opera.

Yours until the William the Twicer gives that dinner in Paris,

Barney.

P.S.—I hope Skinny keeps well. He will if he don't try to sing again tonite.

[Illustration: his voice wuz trained fer Grand Rapids instead of Grand Opera]

Dere Julie,

They took away our maiden names yesterday, and give us numbers, Skinny's is 31. Yesterday his old man arrived in camp to visit him. Stepping blithely up to the top sarge he pipes up "I am the father of thirty-one." "Well said the sarge, you ain't got much on me, I am the father of eighteen myself."

My number is 475. Today they marched us off to listen to a hour sermon by a antiquated ol' bunch of spinnage, who at the end bawled out, No. 475. "Art thou weary, Art thou languid?" An now they give me 7 days in the guard house because I yelled out that I certainly was. How was I to know that the ol' billy goat was givin out the him to be sang.

Im readin in the papers you sent me from home that Bill Ferguson has enlisted, which fact leads your "uncle Dudley" to say that the war certainly is nearin the end, for nobody ever knowed Bill to hold a job more than 30 days at the longest.



We got our first settin up exercises today. Believe you me, they are more settin down than they are settin up. All the boobs have to lie on there backs, put there laigs in the air, and move 'em like he wuz ridin a bicycle. All to once Skinny Shaner stopped. The drill Sarge stepped over and deemanded to know why he quit. "Im coastin" pipes Skinny, "I always do a little coastin when I ride a wheel." Believe you me if Skinny ever tries to ride all of them wheels in his head at one and the same time, he have to do a considerable lot of coastin. With love and mushes,



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Barney.

P.S.—I hope this war lasts till I get over. I'll make that poll parrot of a clown quince learn to say "*Uncle*" in jig time. He won't have as much chance as a tallow legged dog chase a cat thru H——. Now that the Yanks have Come in fur fair, Kings, Queens and two spots is gonna be throwed in the discard.

[Illustration: "Coastin"]

Dere Julie,

The Doc says that me and Skinny will recover, but we'll never look the same. It wuz like this. Day behind yesterday we wuz out for bombin practice, each one havin quite some supply of them hell on the Wabash lookin things in our posesshun. Of course nothing wood do Skinny, but that he must have a smoke. All to once, as you read in the papers, their was a tree-mendus explosion and I went up what seamed to me about a thousand feet. On the way down, I met Skinny going up, he yelled out to me, "I'll bet you five bucks that I go higher than you did." Skinny is some sport.

Some of our training officers has seen active service in the front line trenches. Yesterday was visiting day in camp; after drill, as pretty a "Jane" as I have seen in this neck of woods asks one of 'em did he croak a Fritz, while on the other side? "I sure did," sed he "with this mighty rite hand." Whereupon, this "bunch of peeches" grabs his hand and kisses it. Skinny 'lowed as how *he* would have told her he bit him to deth. That's Skinny, he's strong for the "Janes." Don't peeve up Julie, a lot of 'em down here fall for me, but I let 'em lay; exceptin for a few I've saw, you have 'em all lashed to the mast howlin fur mercy.

Seems to me like we don't do anything down here but walk. It's a wonder to me that all of us don't walk in our sleep. I was telling Skinny we should have joined the cavillry, but Skinny said no; He 'lowed as how if he ever had to retreat he didn't want to be bothered with no horse.

Yours truly and affectionately,

Barney.

[Illustration: "I'll bet 5 bucks I go higher than you."]

Dere Julie:

Many thanks for the pink silk piejamas, with the red ribbon ties. Skinny sez they are "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." It don't take much to make Skinny poetical. When the Sarge got a lamp at 'em he sed "they would move *anyone* to poetry, if he didn't "do the Dutch" first."



I'm afraid the Pres. is not running this trainin biz rite. What's the use of wisin up this big bunch of guys, when one company of cooks could wipe out the Fritzies in twenty four hours, if they can get 'em to eat some of the stuff they wish onto us. We have seventeen kinds of meat everyday—hash. That's all rite. We can stand fur that, but when they put raisins in it on Sunday and call it puddin, good nite, its enough to make a feller bat 1000 in the booze league.



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Speakin of shufflin off reminds me that Skinny 'lows as how we ought to make our wills before we hit the briny trail. The only *will* I'm worried about Julie, is *will* I cum back? And that's no Bullsheveki, fur you know derie when one of them tin fish strikes a transport, yer jest as well let your voice fall. Say Julie, I'm not fur this country down here a-tall. It has ticks; chiggers and nats all open fur biz at one and the same time. You never had a tick on you did you Julie? Well a dog with two sets of flees isn't any busier than said tick. They ought to draft a lot of 'em into the engineers. They are the best lil' trench diggers on earth. They always selects a place between your shoulder blades where you can't reach 'em and dig in. The think-tank of a tick is not large; but unless they have been shootin hop into themselves, they can make a guy feel as small as a bar of soap after a hard days washin. Yours till the kaiser's mustash droops,

Barney.

P.S. Skinny sez this means "poor simp" but lissen, derie, fer you it means pretty sweet.

[Illustration: "Them ticks is the best lil' trench diggers in the army."]

Friday the thirteenth.

Dere Julie:

A bugler is jest as popular round this camp in the a.m. as a roman nose in Russia. If "yours truly" ever gets a large bunch of the mazuma I'm gonna hire a bugler to blow the revelee every morning at 6 under my window so I can tell him to go to H——. Skinny sed a Jane he asked to marry him wunce told him to go to the same place; she didn't jest zactly tell in them words, but sed to go ask her paw. Now Skinny knowed her "old" man was dead, he also knowed what kind of a life he'd lead, so Skinny was wise to what she ment when she piped "Ask dad." If she'd told me that same I would have thought she was flashin a spiel for Sweet Caps. Skinny says that's repartee, but I think its *rap-artee*. Speakin of Russia, I see by the papers that a new revolution has busted out there. That God forsaken country reminds me of a fly wheel on a automobeel— 2000 revolutions per minute.

I had a grate peece of luck this a.m. I had three portions of bacon for breakfast which same happed on account of my bein seated between a young Jewish feller on one side, and a Catholic feller on the other. It bein Friday—nuff sed. Don't ever try to tell me again that Friday the thirteenth is unlucky.

If I was loose from the army, I could make a million dollars in the umbrella business; its stopped pouring now, but comin in bucket fulls, and we are looking fur orders from Washington any day to begin to build a ark.



Last nite after taps me and Skinny wuz arguin about who wuz to blame for this war. Confidentially Julie, I think it was Theo. Roosevelt. Do you remember Julie, about ten years ago when Theo. was on a trip round the world, he called on Bill the Twicer and Bill got out his army and peeraded them in Theo.'s honor? and Theo. not wantin to be lackin in perliteness, slapped Bill on the back and sed, "Bill with an army like that you can lick the world," Member him sayin that Julie? Well he did, and Bill the Two-spot, was d— fool enuff to fall fur Theo's bunk.



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Yours 'till the Klown Quince sings the Star Spangled Banner.

Barney.

[Illustration: "An' Bill The Twicer wuz fool enuff to fall fer Theo's bunk"]

Camp Wadsworth.

Dere Julie:—

Well, ol' girl, you can see by the heading of this that we have gone south. The plentifullest things down here is "dinges", mules and mud, and you very seldom see one without the other. You know Julie "Birds of a fether gathers no moss"; sumpin like that anyhow; you know Julie I was never much on problems. I see a big lazy dinge yesterday asleep against a corner of the barracks when the bugle blowed the mess call; he woke up in time to hear the last notes; stretching himself and scratching his bed, he said: "Dar she blows, dinner time for white folks, but just 12 o'clock for niggers."

Well Julie, you can bet your Wrigleys and every hair on your bureau, that what Sherman said about war is right; its easy to get in an' hard to get out. Reminds me of the story my ol' man tells about when he lived on a farm (You know Julie dere, I told you my old man was raised on a farm in Brooklin, N.Y.U.S.A.). He stuck his bean into a yoke, to teach a yearling calf to work double, and the way that calf started to hot foot it to the other end of Long Island was some exhibition of speed. He could have give the Empire State express a ten mile start at Peekskill and beat it into Powkeepsy. He yanked my ol' man along so fast that his feet only struck the ground every other mile. If the calf had run around in a circle, my ol' man could have spit in his own face. His coat tail stuck out so straight behind you could have played a game of peaknuckle on it. Finally the o' man got hep that he wasn't gonna be able to break the calf before the calf broke my ol' man's neck so he yelled out, "here we come, dum our fool souls, somebody hed us off." So Julie, see if somebody bobs up who is able and willin to stop this little unpleasentness, let him go to it like a sick kitten to a hot rock.

Member Julie that song we all usto sing comin home on the boat after a picnic at Staten Island of the Patrick Dooley East Side Outing and Chowder Club? You know Julie—The chorus ends with Beans! Beans! Beans! Say kid, that song would fit in this camp like a hungry tramp at a chicken dinner. Every farmer in the good ol' U.S.A. must have planted nothing but beans for the last two years. We have 'em boiled fer breakfast, baked fer dinner, and in the soup for supper. Every time the Chaplin (not Charlie) says grace, he always "Thanks the Lord for these tokens of his grace," and Skinny got forty-ate hours in the booby hatch fer askin me real loud like, so everybody could hear him to "please put some of them tokens on his plate."

[Illustration: "Dinner fer white folks, but jest 12 o'clock fer niggers—"]



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But all the same Julie I'm glad I'm here. Of course I miss you; as the poet sez "Your brite smile haunts me still." Never will I ferget what a beautiful picture you made the Sunday before I left when I was rowin you round the lake in Central Park. You was settin up in the bough of the boat trailing your lily white hand in the water, and looking up into my eyes you gurgled in a voiced choking with love, emotion and beer, you said, "Wouldn't it be heavenly derie, if we could go floting down life's stream in a boat like this forever and ever"—an' me paying 25c. an hour for the boat. Of course you didn't think of that, did you derie.

Yours until Brooklyn wins another penant,

Barney.

Dere Julie:

On land again, thank God! Comin across we skidded several times and there were occasions when it looked like there wuzn't anything like dry land in the whole world, yet we finally landed on terra cotta, vice vers, or whatever Lattin fraze they use for solid ground.

Believe you me, Julie, I luv a life on the ocean wave like a burlecue soubrette luv an alarm clock; that is I like it a lot, but not a heluva lot. Fer four hours at a strech I leand over the side of the ship; I wuzn't interested in the ocean or the study of fishes, only I felt I had sumpin I must give up. Finally, after givin up everything, even standin for some of Skinny's jokes, I managed to recover sufficient to enjoy two meals before we got to the dock. Believe you me, derie, you do not know how near you cum to havin to wear black, and cashin in on my life insurance. Speaking of life insurance, reminds me of Skinny's prayer when he turned in one night when it was stormy. "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, If the ship should sink before I wake, Uncle Sam has made a \$10,000 mistake."

And speaking of turning in brings up the subject of hammicks; show me a guy who can ride one all nite without being turned out, and I'll back him to ride the best tricky mule that P.T. Bamum ever trained. About the only way to do, when the nite is ruff, and the ship is rockin, is to sit down and wait until your hammick comes around, and jump on it and choke it into insensibility. I made out to do this better than the balance of the bunch, as I had had more practice, owing to the fact I used to use this method after a nite with the boys; when I got to my street I used to sit down on the curb, and wate fur my house to come round; when it came I used to jump on it and hang on.

Believe you me Julie, that "A life on the ocean wave" may be all rite as a song but its no noise fur a guy who was born and brung up in Longacher square.

Will rite you again as soon as I get my land legs.

Yours until they build another statue to Von Hindenburg.

Barney.

[Illustration: "I felt as if I had somethin I *must* give up."]

Dere Julie,



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Arrived in London O.K. and wet. London is worse than them that talk about it. When we got unshipped at Liverpool it was rainin cats and dogs, Skinny was worried over getting his new scenery wet, as he had lost his rain coat, on the way over, so he spent all morning in the rain trying to get a new one. Skinny was wetter than I was when I went home after my nightie the nite you had me stay at your house because it was stormin outside. He was so wet the water was runnin offen his rist watch; Skinny wasn't worried about the rist watch as he said it had been soaked many times before.

Well derie, I am glad I enlisted; I am certainly gettin some experience in this little ol' scrap; and will have sumpin to relate to them slackers when I get home to 'lil ol' New York. Skinny asked me did I know what a slacker stood for. I told him I didn't know everything but that most of 'em reminded me of a lemmen marine pie—yellow all thru, and not enuff crust to go over the top. However don't be too hard on 'em Julie, no person is perfect as Mose Jackson said when he was convicted for the 10th time of harvestin other peoples poultry.

The worst thing I haft to lissen to is Skinny talkin about his first wife. He says he used to sit and hold her hand fer hours; maybe he did, and believe you me Julie from other things he said about her, I believe if he'd ever let loose of her hand she would have killed him.

With love, I am

Yours until the Fritziees sing the Marcel Wave on Unter der Linden,

Barney.

[Illustration: He wuzn't worried. It had been "soaked" often—]

Dere Julie,

Well ol' dear (you see I've already picked up some London wheezes) a week has flat-wheeled by since you've heard from 'lil brighteyes. Last wensday Skinny and me got a pass to do the burg, and our pocket books have been at half mast ever since. As we are billeted some distance from Picadilly, we figgered to go downtown in a taxi, rite there our trubbles begun. We asked the pilot of the tin Lizzie what the tax would be and he comes back with, "2 and 6 thankee sir." Can you beat it? Two dollars fer me and six fer Skinny. We hot footed it down and saved that much.

I didn't care much about ridin with him anyhow. I think he was a Jona; anyway he was so cross eyed that if he'd aimed a gun at Berlin he would have shot an eye out of Constantinopel.

We wuz a little nervous account of not being wise to the customs, but Skinny said if we kept our lids down over our ears nobody would be wise as to what was going on inside



our skulls. The first place we went into was the Palm Tree Inn. All the barkeepers and waiters was "Janes." Most of them wuz pretty good looking; one "Jane" in particular was there with a front. Skinny got one lamp at her and immediately forgot what he joined the army for.

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We wondered why it was called Palm Tree Inn cause there wasn't a palm in sight, but when we showed the color of our coin, then everybody in the joint showed us a palm. The people here move slowly, and believe you me Julie a spider slower than a fifth avenoo handsome cab would have a cinch spinnin a web around all of 'em. Skinny says most of 'em has a long line of ancestors; but let me slip you the "info" derie, that some of 'em must be sinkers on the end of the line. I wish that I knowed as much as they think they do.

Yours till someone counts all the flivvers,

Barney.

P.S. Tomorrow night, Skinny wants me to go to the Opera with him. I'm not goin— cause I always sleep better at home. I'd rather here a soubrette dolled up in a costume that would barely pass the bord of sensers sing a song like "Mother don't bother with the rolls, father's coming with a bun."

[Illustration: Skinny got one lamp at her, and immediately forgot what he joined the army for]

Dere Julie:

These cockney birds sure chirp some language. Believe you me, a guy had orto carry an interpreter around with him. Me and Skinny went out to a swell English camp today to take a peep at English trainin methods; outside we sees a tipical Tommy Atkins settin down fixin sumpin wrong with his kicks; as we heaved along side of him, he yells out to us, "I say, ol' top, have ye any lices?" Skinny, thinkin he ment did we have seam squirrels commenced to bawl him out in jig time, telling him there was no such things in the good ol' U.S.A. when he came back with, "Oh, I say ol' top, I didn't mean the lousy lices, I meant shoe lices." What they say over here about these cooties wouldn't look well in print, and makes me think they are harder to get rid of than a flivver.

If there's one thing in life that Skinny loves its sumpin good to eat. Honestly, Julie, I believe he thinks of eating when he's asleep. We goes into a feedin place yesterday in White Chapel to satisfy what the poets call, an inner longing. I was so hungry my stomak tho't my throat was cut, Skinny slips the female "biscuit shooter" a tip and sez, "Now suggest a good dinner for me;" and she whispered in his listener "Go to some other restaurant." Serves Skinny right about losing the tip for he's such a tight wad that when the company sings "Old Hundred" at chapel Skinny sings the "Ninety and Nine" just to save a cent. Honest Julie, I don't believe he would give two bits to see the statue of Liberty do the hoo-chama-cooch. Speaking of the hoochy-koochy reminds me that we saw the Ol' Curiosity shop that Charlie Dickens wrote about, and desiring to become acquainted with how much Skinny knowed about books, plays, and etcetery, I asked him did he ever see Oliver Twist? He says "no but I've seen Fatima wiggle." He would



miss a point if he sat down on a tack, and it would take a vaccum cleaner to sweep the cob-webs from his noodle; someday I'm gonna hang a peece of crape on his nose, for I think his brain is dead.



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That's why I think he always has a cold in his head, as you know Julie that disease always strikes in the weakest spot.

Yours until one of the Kaiser's sons is wounded,

Barney.

P.S. Keep offen indoor sports, fur none of 'em has got sense enuff to know when to go home.

[Illustration: Skinny wouldn't giv 25 cts. to see the Statue of Liberty do th' hoo-cha-ma-coochy]

Dere Julie,

We have caught up with the Spanish influenzy—not influence! as there ain't no sich thing in the world as Spanish influence. The disease is not confined to Spanish people. It hit Skinny and he speaks Spanish with an Irish accent, and has never been nearer Madrid than a Spanish omelet made in Hoboken.

You're nose gets as red as a rear light on an automobile or the beak of a Park Row panhandler. Your knees knock together like a man who sees a collector for an installment house. The only things it don't attack is your corns. They should rename it mucilage flu because it certainly is a sticker; you have as much pep as an Ingersol watch with the main spring on a two weeks vacation; but cheer up derie, there ain't goin to be any job fer any undertaker. No foreman fur a funeral is gonna say "All those desirin to kiss the corpse, will please pass up this aisle and go down the other." Not for a while I hope; which reminds me of that time you and me went to the revival meetin in Carnarsie. Remember that Julie? You know the time the undertaker put a century note in the plate, and the ol' sky pilot not knowing who it wuz prayed that "the business of the giver would increase an hundred fold."

Skinny went into store today to buy a birthday present for his "Jane" in the U.S. Steppin blithely up to a fresh sales girl he said "I wanna get something for a gift to a lady." "Your wife sir?" sed she. Skinny thought it would be safer to pose as a married man, so he said "Yes'm." "Bargain counter to the right, sir," and she went on wrasslin with her Wrigleys; she was so busy with it, she wasted no more time than a blue gum coon passing a grave yard at midnight, with no rabbits foot in his pocket. The sales ladies in this emporium are always in high speed, with the throttle wide open when it comes to chatter; at another counter I asked the young lady to show me the thinnest thing in underwear. Flashing a 40 below zero look she lisped, "I'm very sorry sir, but she's just gone out to lunch."

Yours until the Eskimos wear Palm Beach suits,



Barney.

[Illustration: "Somethin fer my wife" says he. "Bargain counter next isle" says she]

Dere Julie:

We drilled today for the first time since we landed in this land of smoke and fog. I'd enjoy these drills, in fact so would all the boys, if it wasn't fer Skinny. The only one that's in step is him. He knows as much of the commands as a Bowery Bum knows about publishing a Chinese newspaper.



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Today we saw a German prisoner for the first time. He looked nearly human. Written on his belt was "Gott mit Uns," an English soldier who saw it said, "But I say Ol top *We have the Americans with us.*" So you see they're wise to us already.

Believe you me derie, if this war lasts six months longer, Gen. Pershing and his boys will make German the court language in the lower regions.

Skinny spent last night in the guard house. In trying to get back in camp after taps he runs plum into a sentry who said "Halt, who goes there?" and Skinny told him "Oh never mind, I only have been here a week and you wouldn't know me ennyhow." He told me today that he didn't wanna be a kernel as there wuzn't much chance fer advancement. I think I told you Julie in one of my letters how stingy this bird Skinny is. Last week we got a three day ferlow and beat it up to the big burg to see the sites. Goin into one of the big hotels, I said to the clerk "What are your rates?" "Five shillings up to 10," he said. Skinny called me to one side an' whispered "Ask him how much it will be up to half-past eight."

Well, derie, we hear we're soon goin on to France, and then fare-thee-well loafin. We be busier than a paralyzed man with the cooties. The only thing that's lible to bother me is the language. I don't know whether I can speak it or not, I never tried it.

Yours until they have ham at a Jewish wedding,

Barney.

Dere Julie:

Skinny and me has at last burgled our way into society. You know derie, that what I know about the highbrow stuff would fill a book, and what Skinny don't know would fill a library.

Believe you me derie, you needn't get jelous for I would just as soon get chummy with a flivver as I would with this bunch of "Janes" who put us on exhibition, for that was exactly what we wuz in their eyes—freaks on exhibition.

It happened like this: Lady Blue Jeans Shoddy or some name like that was givin an afternoon funkshun (I'm quotin from the invite so I can't tell you what it means derie) fer charity and a lot of our company was invited to come, admission free—tickets fifty cents. Anyhow it was a lecture by Lord Somebody for the benefit of Lord knows what; the nearest I could make out it was a spiel on "Do married men make the best husbands." I'd like to tell you how I enjoyed the talk—but I don't use that kind of language; anyhow I'll lay a small peece of change that this bird knew less about what he was trying to talk about than you could drive into a turkey gobbler with a peggin' awl. I give in tho, that he was a brave cuss; anybody who stood up and shot "bull" like he did



for two solid hours, must have been brave. Everytime I looked at him I thought of that ol saw "Faint heart never kissed the chamber maid." When he finished everyone in the audience was "out" exceptin an ol maid who was trying to send him a love message by eye wireless.



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After his batteries went dead on him we was invited to eat. It wuz the first time I ever eat out in company with Skinny, and believe you me, Julie, it'll be the last time while I am conscious. I'm not going to try to tell you of all his breeches of etiket 'twould take too long, but he pulled one that was a beaut. He kept mixing honey with his peas; I kep kicking him under the table, and finally I got a chanct to whisper "What in h—— was he doin that for?" He whispers back "How am I gonna make 'em stay on my knife if I dont mix 'em with sumpin."

Yours until country bording houses quit using canned vegetabils.

Barney.

Dere Julie:—

When the Kaiser is canned and I get back to the ol' job, eatin my 3 a day, and holdin your hand in the movies at nite, I'm gonna try fer the vaudeville. We have formed a quartet in our company, and we must be pretty good fer up to the present nobody has fired anything at us but remarks. Skinny tried to git in by telling us his voice was trained; the top sarge sed he guessed it was trained all-rite, all-rite, but he must of trained it selling strawberries. We have a little Yiddish feller in it too, You know, Julie, the one who slips me his bacon every mornin; when he ain't soldierin, he runs a little gents furnishin store on 8th Avenoo; he's some warbler too, but persists in allus wantin to sing "Keep the home fires Burnin." Well Julie, if he has ten thou. insurance on that joint of his, as he sez he has, no wonder he wants to "keep the home fires burnin." He's all business this little Jewish guy. Skinny sez if he was shiprecked on a deserted eyeland he would get up the next morning and try to sell a map of the eyeland to the natives. He's a good business feller too. He rote a song once, fer a big vaudeville actor, and the actor wrote Izzy to send it along and if it was good he would send a check. Izzy wired back to send the check, if it was good, he'd send the song.

Well Julie, I'd like to see your little blonde bean just about now. Believe you me, Julie, me for the blondes every time. Skinny says that brunettes is the most popular; well maybe he's right; ennyhow his girl has been both, so I suppose he knows. I don't know whether you ever saw this "dame" of Skinny's or not Julie. She lives on the upper east side of New York and ways about 275 plus in her bathin suit; believe you me, she ought to marry a traffic cop as he's the only guy I know of that can handle a crowd. I'll bet 10 cents against Bryan's chance of being Pres. Skinny can wear one of her stockins for a sweater. If she ever wore a striped waist she'd look like the awning over a greek candy store, she never knows when she needs a shine, fer, like Bill the Twospot, she can't see de feat.

Believe you me, angel face she looks like a model fer a tent.



When Her and Skinny walks along Broadway the newsies yell, “Hully Gee! Here goes the clarinet and the bass drum, where’s the rest of the band?” I’m tellin Skinny I can’t see anything attractive about her, and he says “I know you can’t see anything but she’s got it in the bank all-rite, all-rite.”



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Speaking about this William Jennins Bryan, I'm readin in the papers about a bull chasin him half way across a field. Imagine Julie, a bull doin that to Theo. Rusevelt, it wouldn't go ten feet before Theo would turn round, grab it by the tale and throw it. When it comes to throwin the bull Theo. has any Spainnard or Mex lashed to the mast howling for mercy.

Yours until Eva Tanguay quits singin "I don't care."

Barney.

P.S. Tell your ol' man not to lose any sleep over the four bits I owe him on that last peaknuckle game, for if anything happens to me here you can give it to him out of the I.i. policy.

NOWHERE IN FRANCE.

Dere Julie:

At last we are in the land made famous by Joan of Ark, and notorious by N. Bonaparty. The little burg we are billeted in is about as big as a pound of choclates after a Yale-Harvard football game. It's so small you can stand on the corner of Rue de Main and spit into the country. It looks like the ornament on a birthday cake or a picture post office card.

We have been hear about 1 week, and would have written sooner but for the second time in the life of yours truly, I am recovering from "Mal dee Mear" (the name is bad enuff, but the disease is worse) Third Class passengers call it sea-sickness, but if you have a first class cabin, you are supposed to call it mal dee mear.

They say its only about 30 miles from Dover to Callay; maybe it is on a calm day, but believe you me derie, we went up the hills of water to the tune of about a hundred miles. It was all-rite goin up, but Julie goin down is when everything "comes up." That's if you have anything left to come up.

[Illustration: "I don't know what to call you," sez he, "Call me an ambulance," says I.—]

The game we played comin over would have been a good trainin fer a prize fiter. We tumbled round so we looked like we was shadow boxin. "Snappy brand of weather" pipes one of these sailor guys. He was rite, I never remember givin a better imitation of a whip snapper; and the wind, Julie dere, the wind which spends its time round the Flatiron and Woolworth Buildings, are as the poets say "gentle zepthers" to that which sweeps across the English channel when a man sized storm is on; it listens like a cross between the moan of a dyin giastacutus and a subway express behind time under the East River.



I never before was so glad to set my foot on dri land. I was so tickled I could have kisst the ground if it had been Hoboken, N. J.U.S.A. Next time they send me to Vive la France, I hope they send me by parcels post or airoplane. I bumped into the Captain; he said, "I dunno what to call you," I told him he could call me an ambulance or a taxi, anything to get to land with. We have been on water so much since we swore our way into the army, that I don't know whether I'm in the army or navy. Tomorrow me and Skinny is gonna get a pass to look over Paree. We're lookin forward to a big time with what Skinny calls "Ze gay chansonettes." I don't know whether he means a disease or a dance, as I don't make this parley-voo much, but I'm gonna find out before we come back.

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With love I am yours until my wrist watch goes 24 hrs without takin a recess,

Barney.

P.S. How about my other shirt, did you get it from the Chinks?

Nowhere in France the morning after a night in Paris.

Dere Julie:

So this is Paris. Believe you me, Julie, I don't see why they wanna keep Wilhelm the Twicer away from this burg; give him 48 hrs. in Paree like the once around the clock we had here and it would be fare-thee-well Wilhelm. There would be nothin left to say but "don't he look natural."

Speaking of funerals, Julie reminds me that was the first thing we met up with when we arrove in Paree! Flowers, paul-bearers, an everything. Skinny lowed as how it must be some high and mitey who had joined his 4 fathers, and asked a Frenchy standing on the curb of the "bull-yard" who the big guy wuz? Shrugging his shoulders, he pipes up with sumpin which sounded like "Monsewer Jennyseepah." Well, we didn't ever here of the poor boob, so we went over onto the next Rue (make that Julie. I'm getting along fine), and we runs slap bang! into a other funeral more elegant than the first; and Skinny not wantin to let anything get by him, again asked the name of the guy ridin in the head waggin and he got the same answer "Monsewer Jennyseepah." "Yer a liar," yelled Skinny, "we just saw *his* funeral on the other street." Well, Julie, I don't blame Skinny, I was a little sore myself on the way this guy tried to string us.

[Illustration: Me an' Skinny seen the toom of Napoleon the Wunst.]

We got along seem the sights without much trouble; the toom of Napoleon the Wunst, the bridge over the Sane, the 4th of July colum and Champ de Lizzie; feelin hungry we drifted into a swell lookin feedin place with good lookin she waiters. Now don't be nervous Julie, there ain't nothin gonna happen with me and them Jane's; for believe you me star of my heart, I don't *care* what anybody says to me, but you can bet every dollar that Hetty Green ever gave to charity, that when I do marry, I'm gonna get a dame who bawls me out in language that I understand. Well, luckily we struck a she waiter who spoke a little American; to put it as she said "I speak a leetle of what Monsewer calls ze Anglaise." The first thing we ordered was soop. The Jane brought it in a bowl and had her thum jabbed into it, when Skinny pointed to her thum in the soop, she grinned and sed "Zats all rite, Monsewer, it is not hot." We got along very well (considerin that Skinny kept her mind offen her business by trying to send her a eye wireless) and got down to the desert. You know me Julie, Me for the good old fashioned pies like my ol' lady makes. Gettin a lamp at what looked like a juicy huckleberry pie, I pointed to it and said in my company tone of voice "Please give me a big dose of that huckleberry pie."



Puttin on her prettiest smile and rollin her eyes, and arching her shoulders she cum back with “if Monsewer will pleease brush off ze flies, he will find it is custard pie—*not* ze huckleberry.”



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Its a good thing we are leaving to-morrow to go toward the front for if we staid round her long the moral of our regiment would stand at about zero minus 5.

Yours until they chase the Kaiser to Holland with the balance of the windmills.

Barney.

On the Hike Nowhere in France.

Dere Julie:

There shure is a bunch of widows over here, Both grass and sod. I say little brighteyes, do you think it possible fer a guy to get hay fever from a grass widow? Ennyhow Skinny got some kind uv fever when he was chummin round with these female comfort kits, and if they don't lose his trail, I can see visions of a certain (what the dickens is that French word for fat—oh yes, embumpoint), lady in Hoboken, N.J.U.S.A., lookin fer a new affinity. In other words, unless the signs is misleading, Skinny is gonna lose his liberty by gettin married, and its the opinion of your "'Lil Brighteyes" that the speech of P. Henry of Va. on "Give me Liberty or give me deth" was made, more because he was married than because he was patriotic; and all the married men, I'm told Julie, are chirpin the same wheeze. Of course with you derie, its different. I don't believe you would accuse a feller of keepin another woman when his pay envelope is a nickle shy on Sat. night.

Skinny and me had a date with the Pudding Sisters at the canteen last nite, and believe you me, they was some babies, and was well worth the money we spent on 'em.

Some people we met today from Belgium say that when the Fritziees get soused, they hug and kiss every woman they meet. What a fat chance for that sweet maiden of fifty years who grabbed me off at the station, the day I left for camp. You can bet your Wrigleys that after a regiment passed her she would make a detour and catch up with the head of it again.

Yours until Eyetalian restaurants serve real wine.

Barney.

P.S. After readin this letter over I tho't I'd better wise you up on that date me and Skinny had with the pudding sisters at the canteen last nite. Women are so suspicious you know. I ment we went down to the canteen to get some puddin, rice and tapioca.

"B."

[Illustration: She would run and ketch up with the hed of the perseshun]



Dere Julie:

Your last lovin letter was rec'd by your little bright eyes in a quaint old burg in viva la France, just back of where the Yanks are making soup strainers of William the Twicer's boobs by punchin them in the kitchen with that "wooden sword of America." You know Julie, that story that the Emp has been jabbing them in the arm with about "America couldn't fite if she would, and wouldn't if she could," and tellin em also about Germany's "submarines sinking all the Yanks transports etcery etcery." If Bill keeps this up very long they will nickname him Barnum.

Speaking of William the Twospot, reminds me of what one of our boys, which was taken prisoner and escaped, wuz telling about what the Emp said when he saw so many of our boys on the front at Chato Theiry; sendin fer some of his generals he deemanded they tell him what boat brung all them Yanks over. One of 'em piped up and sed "I think, yer Majesty it was the Lusitania." Being German, it went over his bed like a air ship.



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The way things are goin now, it looks as if William the Twicer is gonna have a great future behind him: Skinny sez the Klown Quince and his army reminds him very much of his (Skinny's) brother who went out west and made twenty Indians run—but the Indians couldn't ketch him. Believe you me derie, the Boches are running faster than the color in a 19 ct. pair of stockings. They are hot footin it faster than the train that I left for camp on pulled out of Grand Central Station; and that pulled out so fast that when I tried to kiss you from the window when she started, I kissed a cow ten miles away.

Well Julie dere, I miss you much believe you me. I'd rather see you just about now than a messenger with the news that piece has been sined; of course there's a lot of nice girls hear among the Red X Nurses and Y workers, but there's so many officers and gold braids round that fellers like us dont get any more show than a dollar at a church fair.

[Illustration: Speakin' of William the Two-spot]

We're up now to where we can hear the noise of the big 75's as they pound the Boches from their trenches and have gotten so used to it that we can't sleep without it. Every once in a while we see the ambulances comin in, and a lot of the boys have to be watched to keep em from trying to beat it back into the trenches again. We heard yesterday Julie, about a detachment who went over the top and the commanding officer told em not to go beyond a certain objective during the first half hour; when the half hour was up they wuz a half mile beyond the objective. When the major of the battalion bawled out the company commander, he yelled back at him "H—— if the Crown Prince's men couldn't stop 'em what chance had I to stop 'em?" That's whats winning this hi' ol' scrap Julie—we hit em first and apologise afterward.

Some of our boys was sayin to-day that they thought the war would soon be over, and when I ast Skinny about it, he allowed as how that meant fer single guys only; that the war would go on fer married men just the same. Corporal Louie Heinlein sez that song "Here cums the bride is the greatest battle song of all" and Louie has had a lot of experience with "Janes." But with you and me Julie dere, that will be sumpin else again.

Yours till people keep their New Year's resolutions until Valentines day,

Barney.

Dere Julie,

At last I have smelt the smoke of battel, and fer the third time since I joined the colors you don't know how near you've been to cashing that 10 thou. insurance policy. You would have cashed it fer sure this time, if it hadn't been fer a despised cooty; never again will yours truly be hard on 'em.



I have one that I'm gonna retire on a penshun. It wuz like this. Our regiment wuz called upon to go into the front line trenches and while I was peepin over the top, one of them pesky "seam squirrels" commenced bitin the back of my neck. I bent my head for'd to reach over on the back of my neck to pick him off, at one and the same time a sniper cut loose at me from a big tree just outside the line of Fritzies trenches; had my head been where it was before I started to get the cooty, it would have been fare-thee-well Barney, so I just put Mr. Lifesaver back, and, as before stated, I'm gonna put him on a penshun.



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Believe you me derie, the way our boys made that sniper climb down out of that tree would make Tarzan of the apes have a hemorage, and turn green with envy; he shinned down that landscape decorashun like as if it was greased.

Well derie, when we first swore our way into the army, I thought Skinny was a coward; I figgered if he ever got in a regular scrap with Bill the Twickers hired patriots his knees would knock together like a pair of castnets played by a Spanish bull fiter; but I take it all back, Skinny in battel is a whole team and a cross dog under the waggin. It came about like this. We was bein bumbarded by the Fritziees in the most approved style and believe you me derie, the shells and shrapnels was flyin round and over our heads thicker than hungry bums around a free lunch counter; all to once Skinny commenced to get a bad case of the hecupes. I didn't say anything to him as I was busy with a little party of my own when all to once he yells to me, "Say Barney, fer Heavens sake do somethin to scare me so I can get rid of these d—— hecupes." So you see Julie dere, you never can tell by the looks of a frog how fer it can jump.

This lil' old scrap has brung out a lot of cases like Skinny's; fellers in civil life that you think wouldn't have the sand to get manicured, or ther hair cut without takin cloroform, are puttin themselves on the map faster than towns on newly opened Government land. Even the married men in our regiment are gettin so "Spiffy" that I believe they'll have sand enough to talk back to friend wif when they get back home.

Yours until they make bottles without false bottoms.

Barney.

[Illustration: He cum down that tree quicker than Tarzan uv the Apes]

Dere Julie,

Well Julie, a courier has just horned his way into camp with the "info" that this lil ol' scrap is over, and I've lost an other chance to be a hero; but I'm not gonna go round making a noise like a dill pickel, just because I didn't get no show to give the Fritziees a upper cut. I'd rather be a live simp Julie, than a dead hero, any day.

Its better for me ennyhow, to say "there he goes, than here he lies." Believe you me derie, I've saw enuff of the damage these Boch pills can do, to know that a boob who tries to stop one of 'em with his frame, has no more chance than a 10 cent piece of ice when the thermometer is 99 plus in the shade, or a scuttle of suds in a Bowery gin mill.

Well Ol' dear, she's over, and I didn't get a chance to croak a single Fritzie. My ol' man had better luck in the civil war. He was out one hot nite with a foraging party and they run into a confed ambushade, a big fat Johnny Reb took after my old man and the chase was nip and tuck fer about 2 miles. Just when the ol' gent had give himself as

lost, he saw over his shoulder the confed fall down in a heap and die from being overheated. But at last Julie dere, we have made the world safe



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fer the Democrats, so you can kill the cow's young son fer little bright eyes as they did fer that young high roller mentioned in the Bible. If veal is top high in the good ol' U.S.A., I'll be satisfied with a table-dee-hoty dinner at the Cafe Des Enfants (meaning Child's Restaurant), I'm not particular Julie, so long as every course is served with your smilin face opposite. The more I see of the "Janes" over here the better I like the Julies over there. I've saw 'em all and not a one can hold a tallow candle up a dark alley to my own Julie. In the language of the poet

You can talk of English women
Who like there beef and beer;
Of Italy's black haired beauties
Who love there land so dere;
Of Spanish turtle doves
Who sing of wealth and love;
But give me the U.S. Girl
She wins my esteem
Fer everytime you kiss her
You get the flavor of—Boston Pork & Beans!

[Illustration: Home again, across the ol' Atlantic.]

Skinny has just arrove back in camp from the trenches and got the news about the sining of the armistice. He was caked with mud from hed to foot, which he said he didn't mind till our captin complimented him on holdin all the ground they took yesterday. I guess Skinny thot he was bein kidded. I made him pull off his clothes in jig time fer if he'd ever get caught out in the rain like that he would have suffered a landslide.

Well derie, I don't suppose an other letter will reach you before "Yours truly" so I can't say if I will rite again or not; enny-ways on our way back across the ol' Atlantic we wont have to look out fer any of William the Twicers tin fish, and when I get back to the land of the free and the home of the brave, I'm gonna be afraid to get on a ferry boat fer fear she might head across the ocean. And now Julie, fare-thee-well until I hold you in my arms again,

Yours until married men have alibyes there wives believe

Barney.

P.S. I've just learned our regiment is to leave for home at once, so plug the push button on that guys bell in the hallway.