

11-18-1918

1918-11-18, Elmo to Emeline

Elmo S. Culbert

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Subject Terms

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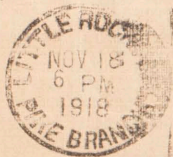
U.S.A., U.S. Postal Service, Stamp, Washington, George, President Washington, Salt Lake City, U.S.A., Soldiers, Homesickness, Morale, Training, Romance, Wife, Self-Determination, Attorney, Post-War Hopes, Bayonet, Women at Home, Gifts from home, Funds, Prayer, Rainy Weather, Photograph, Education, Sex, Inspection, Humor, Celebration, Gift, Music, Songs, Chicago, Telegraph, Tobacco, Topography, Musical Instrument, Soldiers' Slang, Thanksgiving, Going Home

Identifier

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Mrs. Elmo A. Culbert,
Salt Lake City,
Utah.

% Shields Staty. Co.

Wednesday Night.

Dear sweet wife of mine: -

Well, sweetheart, another day done, ^{and} believe me, I'm some tired. We have been having some tough bayonet work today, and it is some, physical torture. The peace don't seem to mean any let up on our work here - it seems harder, if any thing. There is a lot of talk here, dead, about our being mustered out, but nothing definite has come to us, so I'm still plugging away at it. Really sweetheart, if I were turned loose tomorrow, I haven't any idea what I would do - only the one thought is uppermost in my mind - to rush to my girl or have her rush to me - I'm so lonesome ^{and} blue for you, sweetheart - it just seems years ^{and} years since I left all I love behind me. You know, dear, I've been gone a lot from you in the past, but I never liked this. I'm just so hungry for your sweet love that I want to reach out through the space ^{and} draw

you to me, heart ^{and} soul.

Baby girl, if the opportunity comes to stay here ^{and} receive my com., what shall I do? You always know best, so I want to hear from you about it. The trouble with me is, I have nothing in the way of a good position to go back to - I wouldn't work for Lamberts' again - ^{and} I will simply have to start all over again. But maybe we had better wait ^{and} see what they want to do with me here. In any event, I shure do want my girl with me.

Received your telegram yesterday, dear - it was just like you. I know just what every word of it meant, to.

Did I tell you yet that your package arrived with your Dad's gift? It was very acceptable, dear, ^{and} I was out of tobacco ^{and} I haven't been paid as yet - am about busted. I know, though, that part of

it was yours, and the trouble of sending it was all yours. Thank him for me, dear, ^{and} take a whole basket of love for your thanks.

Dear, I don't have time to write, only occasionally to you - so just tell them all that I'm well ^{and} let it go at that.

Baby girl, life is a funny thing, isn't it? Some of us never appreciate a thing until we have to do without it ^{and} that applies to me more than anyone that I know of. I've been all kinds of a fool, but lets hope it isn't too late to start over again. Are you with me, sweetheart?

Must close now, dear girl. Will keep you advised as to anything new here. In the meantime I'm in the air.

Good night, dear sweet little helpmate. I do hope you're well.

Your own
Boy.

Thursday Night.

No. Something,
I don't know what.

Sweetheart mine. -

A lot of rumors, but nothing authentic as to what we are going to do, dear. I do know one thing, though the morale of the men here is entirely broken - about 80% of them want to go home ^{and} have just simply slowed up on all ~~up~~ of their work. One of our officers told us today that we would probably finish here ^{and} then be discharged ^{and} put on the Officers' Reserve Corps. On the other hand, word in the local newspapers says that we will have the option of getting discharged or continuing ^{and} finishing. However, nothing from headquarters has been received, so we are all up in the air. And, dear, I don't know what I would do if I were to have the say so. What shall I do, sweetheart? On one hand, I

have the probable chance of returning home to you dear & recatter civil life, while on the other hand, a chance might be offered to get what is equivalent to a 4 years ~~course~~ West Point course in two more months - and there is no question but what it is a wonderful opportunity. I'm up in the air at the best. Well, I guess the only thing to do is to wait ^{and} see what they say here.

Lights are about to go out, little sweetheart, so I'll have to finish this tomorrow. Good night, sweet little sunshine.

Friday, dear, ^{and} nothing new. Nothing but rumors here today, but from an issue we received tonight of topography instruments (cost me 90¢) it looks like we go right on with our work. I've just wondering ^{and} worrying about it. I'll just let

things come as they might.

Sweetheart, rec'd. another sweet letter today, written last Sunday - and it sure listened good to me - all full of love ^{and} everything. No, baby, I've never taken any pictures, but will right away now - as soon as the sun comes out again. It has been raining since yesterday - we held all of our drills inside of barracks today - but that don't mean any less work. I have tried two or three times to finish this letter, but have always had to drop it. Believe me, dear, this work is stiff, and recently I have secretly been asking myself if I really can make it. The man that gets a com. out of this camp certainly has to make good.

Baby, dear, shall write more tomorrow - shall have the P.M. off, so will have a little more time. Goodnight now sweetheart.

- OVER -

Forever
Gene.

Dear, send me a filler for my
pocket memo, will you please.

It is certainly handy, as I use
it all the time ^{and} am now about
out of paper for it. It is a # ~~1402~~

1402. Thank you, honey girl.

That is all for now.

Love
Elmo.

Saturday Night;

Sweetheart: -

Hurray! dear - I'm going home. Have made up my mind ^{and} have asked for discharge, and I can hardly wait to get there. Oh, honey, how anxious I am to see you, to hold you close ^{and} to know that I can resume my old status of lover at home. And, baby girl, I will be so good to you. Oh, boy - if I could only leave tonight.

Today the news came to us ^{and} for sometime I was in a quandry. Honey, I weighed the proposition from all angles. Here is what they told us. We could put in application for honorable discharge, to take effect sometime within the next week or ten days ^{and} go home ^{and} back to civil life, or we could stay ^{and} finish our course - which will last until Jan. 15th. If we stayed we would have to

make good in order to get our com.,
and then we would probably be
automatically discharged ^{and} put in
the Officers' Reserve Corp. Well, no
pressure was brought to bear, one
way or the other, as to our decision.
But we had to make up our minds
before tomorrow morning at 9 A.M. I
really want to finish, dear, and my
first thought was to go thru with
it ^{and} show myself that I could
make good. I also thought of the
wonderfull education afforded,
and the broader scope it would
give me. And then, dear, on the
other hand, I thought of you - thought
of your struggle all by yourself ^{and}
I knew I belonged with you. I
haven't any idea what I will
do when I return, but I'm going back
^{and} start all over again. It took a lot
of studying ^{and} thought, sweetheart mine,
to definitely make up my mind,

but, no matter how bright a chance might be offered here, I couldn't get you and your sacrifices out of mind long enough to think about sticking. Here's the way it would sum up. If I stuck, I'd have to make good as a 1st Lieut., as the ratings now, since peace, revert back to the old basis, and the age limit for a 2nd Lieut. is 28 years, for a 1st 34 years. That would mean I'd probably have to take an extra course, and then, if I did make good, I'd probably be discharged, or, if I wanted to re-enlist (which I wouldn't want to do) it would mean for a term of 4 years. This would be fine if we could afford it, but I know we can't, so I've definitely decided to go back to you, little baby girl.

I've also given some thought to the proposition of taking a trip to Chicago and maybe further East and trying to line up a good mfg. line to handle on

a brokerage basis. I think, dear,
that is what I will ultimately do,
but, it would take money ^{and} I'm
a pauper. So nothing left to do
but take my little bag back to
you. Are you glad, Sweetheart?
Have just rec'd. your letter about
the great doings at home ^{and} I
know my girl was glad to get
the news ^{and} celebrate. I also
know that you have been anxious
as to how it would affect me. That
of wiring today - but I'm flat - and
I'm not dealing in luxuries. Maybe
I'll send you a wire tomorrow, collect.

Honey girl, until our discharge
comes, our work will go right on,
and that probably means a week or
ten days yet. We will get paid off,
I'm told, with a month's pay bonus,
^{and} given our transportation back to
our enlistment point. And then I'll

beat it out of here as fast as the
trains will take me.

Am tired out tonight, dear.
This is Saturday - my last, I now
hope - and I got stuck for a dirty
rifle at inspection this morning
and had to walk guard this afternoon
from 1 to 5, with $\frac{1}{2}$ hour rest - 2 skins
or 2 tours. And its no snap, either.
I didn't deserve it, either, for my
piece was clean - God knows I
worked enough on it - but these
shave tails can spot a speck of dust
as far as I could a piece of paper.
Results - I walked - regular cadence,
with rifle on shoulder - the bunk.
But its over now and I'm ready for bed.
Didn't get any of my work - washing -
done so I'll have to do it tomorrow.
Had to stand in line for about $1\frac{1}{2}$
hours tonight to sign this discharge
list - out of our company of 250 men,
there will be about 20 left - so you

can see how the fellows here feel about it. This sure has been some hilarious bunch today - can't hold them down. All they talk about is going home. You might have your large celebrations in the cities - but for pep it has nothing on this gang.

Enough for tonight, dear little sweetheart. Shall just number the hours now until I'm again with you.

If you hear of anything good in the way of a job, give it a little thought for me, honey, for I'll have to busy right away.

Good night, now, sweetheart.

All your boys love,

Thanks, honey, for the stamps,
Ours.

Sunday P.M.
My last - I hope,

little waiting wife of mine: -

Dear, Sweet girl, one day closer to home ^{and} you. Since I have definitely made up my mind about leaving, I simply can't think of any thing else. Dear, I don't believe I ever wanted anything as much as I want to leave here now. While there was a purpose in view ^{and} something to work for, I didn't let my mind stray from the work at hand ^{and} facing me - but now that it is all over, I have no more desire to go on than though it were a Greek funeral. And I know that I have done the only right thing in quitting ^{and} that makes me happier, too. Nothing new as to when we will leave, but a lot of rumors are to the effect that we leave about Tuesday. And I won't miss Thanksgiving dinner at home, after all. Oh, girl, don't it listen good to you? Sweetheart, I didn't

wire today - principally because I didn't have the price - and I didn't want to charge it to you. Besides, it will be all the more surprise when you get yesterdays letter.

The day I leave I'll wire & tell you the route I'm taking home. Will my girl be glad to see her boy again? I don't think you will notice any perceptible change in me, dear, but I do know that I feel different - that I live with a different view point & that my every hour from here out will be consecrated to the happiness of my own girl. Oh, that I might be able to make up to you a little of ~~that~~ ~~is~~ the pain I've caused you in the past. My whole life will be one effort to make your happiness complete, dear. Lets pray I might be able to do it.

Dear, today has been spent mostly doing nothing but clean

up, prepare for departure ^{and} swap
yarns about our various homes.
This bunch here are just simply
hilarious. Data up to date shows
that only 1% of the men here will
remain, the balance electing to
go home. And they are all a happy
bunch. Right now the bunch is
congregated about my band with
a violin ^{and} ukelele playing "Home,
Sweet, Home." We have been over to
the K. of C. Hall today, too, playing
^{and} singing.

I looked up Garner ^{and} Boyer
today - the first time I've seen
them since arriving here. They are
both going home ^{and} we will all try to
travel together. They were glad to
see me, as I was them, and we
talked everything over like a group
of gossiping women for about 2 hours.
I have just finished supper - it
is now 6:20 ^{and} if the usual

schedule is followed, we will
have to go to study class at 7.
But I'm afraid there won't be
much study tonight - they are
through, ^{and} don't care what
happens now.

Old sweetheart, look for
your boy soon - he will be so
glad to get home.

Remember me to everybody
of all my love just for you, dear.

Always yours,
Elna

P.S.

Don't overlook a chance to get me
a job - I don't care what. But I must
get to work immediately. x x x x x x
You know what
I mean.

[[Culbert Correspondence #12]]

[[Page 1-Envelope-Front]]

[[image – gray U.S. postage 3 cents stamp of
President Washington facing left]]

[[image – black emblem LITTLE ROCK PIKE
BRANCH; center: NOV 18 6pm 1918]]

Mrs. Elmo S. Culbert,
Salt Lake City,
Utah.

C/O Shields Staty. Co.

[[Page 2-Letter 1]]

Wednesday Night

Dear sweet wife of mine: -

Well, sweetheart, another day done, and believe me, I'm sure tired. We have been having some tough bayonet work today, and it is some physical torture. The peace don't seem to mean any let up on our work here – it seems harder if anything. There is a lot of talk here, dear, about our being mustered out, but nothing definite has come to us, so I'm still plugging away at it. Really sweetheart, if I were turned loose tomorrow, I haven't any idea what I would do –only the one thought is uppermost in my mind – to rush to my girl or have her rush to me –I'm so lonesome and blue for you, sweetheart –it just seems years and years since I left all I love behind me. You know, dear, I've been gone a lot from you in the past, but never like this. I'm just so hungry for your sweet love that I want to reach out through the space and draw

[[Page 3-Letter 1]]

you to me, heart and soul.

Baby girl, if the opportunity comes to stay here and receive my com., what shall I do? You always know best, so I want to hear from you about it. The trouble with me is, I have nothing in the way of a good position to go back to –I wouldn't work for Lambert's again – and I will simply have to start all over again. But maybe we had better wait and see what they want to do with me here. In any event, I shure do want my girl with me.

Received your telegram yesterday, dear –it was just like you. I know just what every word of it meant, to.

Did I tell you yet that your package arrived with your Dad's gift? It was very acceptable, dear, for I was out of tobacco and I haven't been paid as yet –am about busted. I know, though, that part of

[[Page 4-Letter 1]]

it was yours, and the trouble of sending it was all yours. Thank him for me, dear, and take a whole bushel of love for your thanks.

Dear, I don't have time to write, only occasionally to you –so just tell them all that I'm well and let it go at that.

Baby girl, life is a funny thing, isn't it? Some of us never appreciate a thing until we have to do without it and that applies to me more than anyone that I know of. I've been all kinds of a fool, but lets hope it isn't too late to start over again. Are you with me, sweetheart?

Must close now, dear girl. Will keep you advised as to anything new here. In the meantime I'm in the air.

Good night, dear, sweet little helpmate. I do hope you're well.

Your own

Boy

[[Page 5-Letter 2]]

Thursday Night

Nov. Something,

[[underline]] I don't know what. [[/underline]]

Sweetheart mine: --

A lot of rumors, but nothing authentic as to what we are going to do, dear. I do know one thing, though – the morale of the men here is entirely broken – about 80% of them want to go home and have just simply slowed up on all of their work. One of our officers told us today that we would probably finish here and then be discharged and put on the Officers' Reserve Corps. On the other hand, word in the local newspapers says that we will have the option of getting discharged or continuing and finishing. However, nothing from headquarters has been received, so we are all up in the air. And, dear, I don't know what I would do if I were to have the say so. What shall I do, sweetheart? On one hand, I

[[Page 6-Letter 2]]

have the probable chance of returning
home to you dear and reenter civil
life, while on the other hand, a
chance might be offered to get
what is equivelent to a 4 years
[[strikethrough]] cours [[/strikethrough]] West Point coarse in two
more months –and there is no
question but what it is a wonder-
ful opportunity. I'm up in the air
at the best. Well, I guess the only
thing to do is to wait and see
what they say here.

Lights are about to go out,
little sweetheart, so I'll have to
finish this Tomorrow. Good night,
sweet little sunshine ~~sunshine~~.

Friday, dear, and nothing new.
Nothing but rumors here today, but
from an issue we received tonight
of topography instruments (cost me
90¢) it looks like we go right on
with our work. I've quit wondering
and worrying about it. I'll just let

[[Page 7-Letter 2]]

things come as they might.

Sweetheart, rec'd, another sweet letter today, written last Sunday –and it sure listened good to me –all full of love and everything. No, baby, I've never taken any pictures, but will right away now –as soon as the sun comes out again. It has been raining since yesterday –we held all of our drills inside of barracks today—but that don't mean any less work. I have tried two or three times to finish this letter, but have always had to drop it. Believe me, dear, this work is stiff, and recently I have secretly been asking myself if I really can make it. The man that gets a com. Out of this camp certainly has to mark good.

Baby dear, shall write more tomorrow –shall have the P.M. off, so will have a little more time. Goodnight now, sweetheart.

Forever Elmo

-OVER-

[[Page 8-Letter 2]]

Dear, send me a filler for my
pocket memo, will you please.
It is certainly handy, as I use
it all the Time and am now about
out of paper for it. It is a #
1402. Thank you, honey girl.
That is all for now.

Love

Elmo

[[Page 9-Letter 3]]

Saturday Night;

Sweetheart: --

Hurrah! dear –I'm going home. Have made up my mind and have asked for discharge. And I can hardly wait to get there. Oh, honey, how anxious I am to see you, to hold you close and to know that I can resume my old status of lover at home. And, baby girl, I will be so good to you. Oh, boy –if I could only leave tonight.

Today the news came to us and for sometime I was in a quandry. Honey, I weighed the proposition from all angles. Here is what they told us. We could put in application for honorable discharge, to take effect sometime within the next week or ten days and go home and back to civil life, or we could stay and finish our course –which will last until Jan, 15th. If we stayed we would have to

[[Page 10-Letter 3]]

make good in order to get our com.,
and then we would probably be
automatically discharged and put in
the Officers' Reserve Corp. Well, no
pressure was brought to bear, our
way or the other, as to our decision.
But we had to make up our minds
before tomorrow morning at 9 A.M. I
really want to finish, dear, and my
first thought was to go thru with
it and show myself that I could
make good. I also thought of the
wonderful education afforded,
and the broader scope it would
give me. And then, dear, on the
other hand, I thought of you –thought
of your struggle all by yourself and
I knew I belonged with you. I
haven't any idea what I will
do when I return, but I'm going back
and start all over again. It took a lot
of studying and thought, sweetheart mine,
to definitely make up my mind,

[[Page 11-Letter 3]]

but, no matter how bright a chance
might be offered here, I couldn't get
you and your sacrificed out of my mind
long enough to think about sticking.
Heres the way it would sum up.
If I stuck, I'd have to make good as
a 1st Lieut., as the ratings now, since
peace, revert back to the old basis,
and the age limit for a 2nd Lieut. Is
28 years, for a 1st 34 years. That would
mean I'd probably have to take an
extra course, and then, if I did make
good, I'd probably be discharged, or, if
I wanted to re-enlist (which I wouldn't
want to do) it would mean for a term
of 4 years. This would be fine if we
could afford it, but I know we can't
so I've definitely decided to go back
to you, little baby girl.

I've also given some thought to
the proposition of taking a trip to Chicago
and maybe further east and trying to line
up a good mfg. line to handle on

[[Page 12-Letter 3]]

a brokerage basis. I think, dear,
that is what I will ultimately do,
but, it would take money and I'm
a pauper. So nothing left to do
but take my little bag back to
you. Are you glad, sweetheart?
Have just rec'd your letter about
the great doings at home. And I
know my girl was glad to get
the news and celebrate. I also
know that you have been anxious
as to how it would affect me. That
of wiring today –but I'm flat –and
I'm not dealing in luxuries. Maybe
I'll send you a wire Tomorrow, collect.

Honey girl, until our discharge
comes, our work will go right on,
and that probably means a week or
ten days yet. We will get paid off,
I'm told, with months' pay bonus,
and given our transportation back to
our enlistment point. And then I'll

[[Page 13-Letter 3]]

beat it out of here as fast as the
trains will take me.

Am tired out tonight, dear.
This is Saturday –my last, I now
hope –and I got stuck for a dirty
rifle at inspection this morning
and had to walk guard this afternoon,
from 1 to 5, with ½ hour rest – 2 skins,
or 2 tours. And its no snap, either.
I didn't deserve it, either, for my
piece was clean –God knows I
worked enough on it –but these
shave tails can spot a speck of dust
as far as I could a piece of paper.
Results –I walked –regular cadence,
with rifle on shoulder –the bunk.
But its over now and I'm ready for bed.
Didn't get any of my work –washing –
done so I'll have to do it tomorrow.
Had to stand in line for about 1 ½
hours tonight to sign this discharge
list –out of our company of 250 men,
there will be about 20 left –so you

[[Page 14-Letter 3]]

can see how the fellows here feel
about it. This sure has been
some hilarious brunch today –
can't hold them down. All they
talk about is going home. You
might have your large celebrations
in the cities –but for pep it has
nothing on this gang.

Enough for tonight, dear
little sweetheart. Shall just number
the hours now until I'm again
with you.

If you hear of any thing
good in the way of a job, give it
a little thought for me, honey, for
I'll have to busy right away.

Good night, now, sweetheart.

All your boys love,
Elmo

Thanks, honey, for the stamps.

[[Page 15-Letter 4]]

Sunday P.M.
My last –I hope.

Little waiting wife of mine: --

Dear, sweet girl, one day closer to home and you. Since I have definitely made up my mind about leaving, I simply can't think of any thing else. Dear, I don't believe I ever wanted anything as much as I want to leave here now. While there was a purpose in view and something to work for, I didn't let my mind stray from the work at hand and facing me – but now that it is all over, I have no more desire to go on than though it were a Greek funeral. And I know that I have done the only right thing in quitting and that makes me happier, too. Nothing new as to when we will leave, but a lot of rumors are to the effect that we leave about Tuesday. And I won't miss Thanksgiving dinner at home, after all. Oh, girl, don't it listen good to you? Sweetheart, I didn't

[[Page 16-Letter 4]]

wire today –principally because I didn't have the price –and I didn't want to charge it to you. Besides, it will be all the more surprise when you get yesterday's letter. The day I leave I'll wire and tell you the route I'm taking home. Will my girl be glad to see her boy again? I don't think you will notice any perceptible change in me, dear, but I do know that I feel different –that I live with a different view point and that my every hour from here out will be desecrated to the happiness of my own girl. Oh, that I might be able to make up to you a little of ~~what I've~~ the pain I've caused you in the past. My whole life will be one effort to make your happiness complete, dear. Let's pray I might be able to do it.

Dear, today has been spent mostly doing nothing but clean

[[Page 17-Letter 4]]

up, prepare for departure and swap yarns about our various homes. This bunch here are just simply Hilarious. Data up to date shows that only 1% of the men here will remain, the balance electing to go home. And they are all a happy bunch. Right now the bunch is congregated about my bunk, with a violin and ukelele playing "Home, Sweet, Home." We have been over to the K. of C. hall today, too, playing and singing.

I looked up Garner and Boyer today –the first time I've seen them since arriving here. They are both going home and we will all try to travel together. They were glad to see me, as I was them, and we talked everything over like a group of gossiping women for about 2 hours.

Have just finished supper –it is now 6:20 and if the usual

[[Page 18-Letter 4]]

schedule is followed, we will have to go to study class at 7. But I'm afraid there won't be much study tonight –they are through, and don't care what happens now.

Old, sweetheart, look for your boy soon –he will be so glad to get home.

Remember me to everybody and all my love just for you, dear.

Always your,
Elmo

[[underline]] P.S. [[/underline]]

Don't overlook a chance to get me a job –I don't care what. But I must get to work immediately. xxxxxxxx

You know what
those are.