Kansas Memory

KANSAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier

Around 1919, the Kansas State Historical Society and the American Legion solicited biographical information from returning veterans (primarily members of the 35th and 89th infantry divisions) and the families of those who died in service, notably from the Gold Star Mothers. Each veteran or family member was asked to provide letters, photographs, a biography, and military records. This file contains information on Henry Merrill Orr, Navy, Great Lakes Training Station. Orr died from pneumonia on September 29, 1918, at the Great Lakes training camp.

Date: 1918

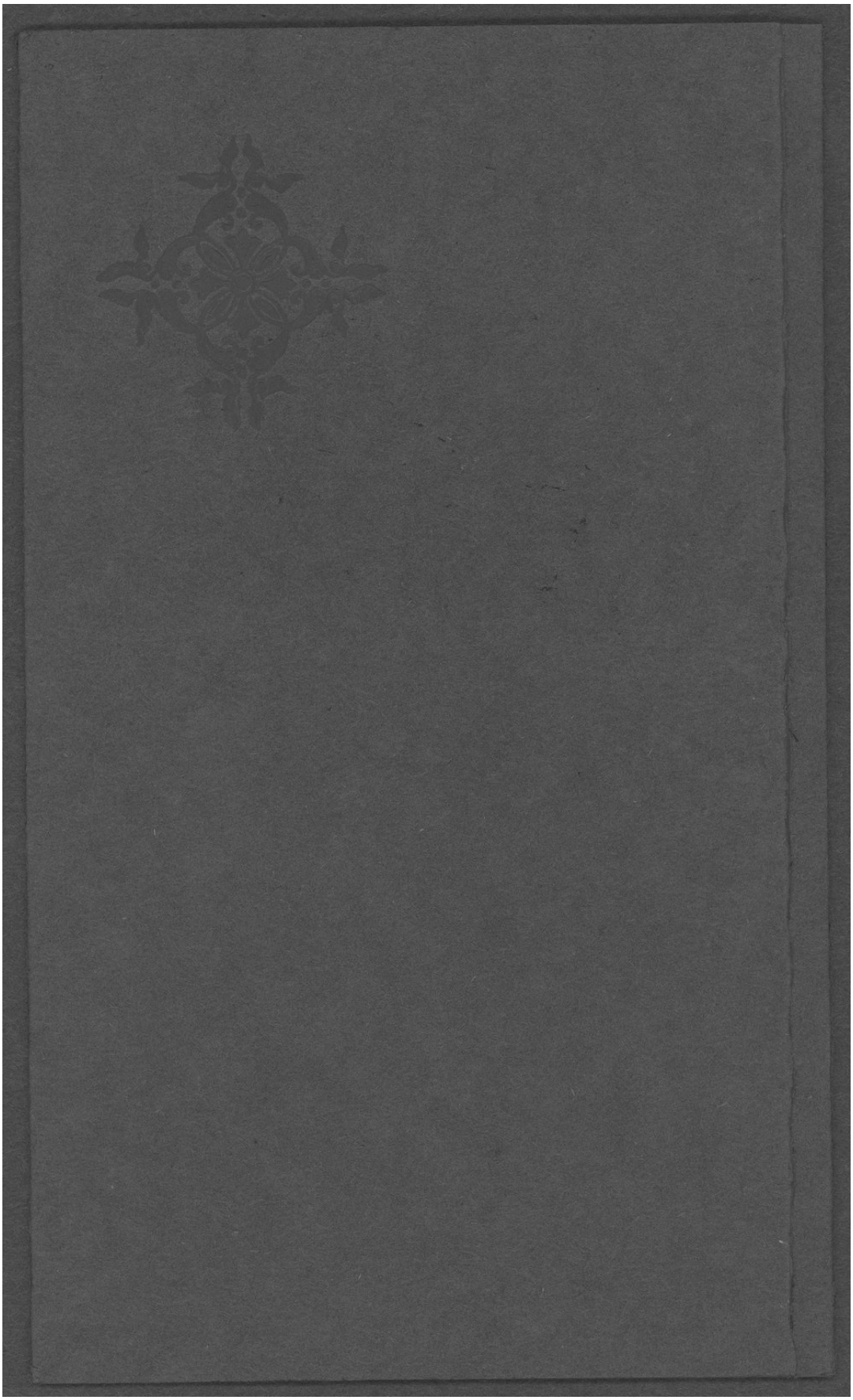
Callnumber: World War I Coll. #49, Box 34 Kansas Soldiers

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 224071

Item Identifier: 224071

www.kansasmemory.org/item/224071

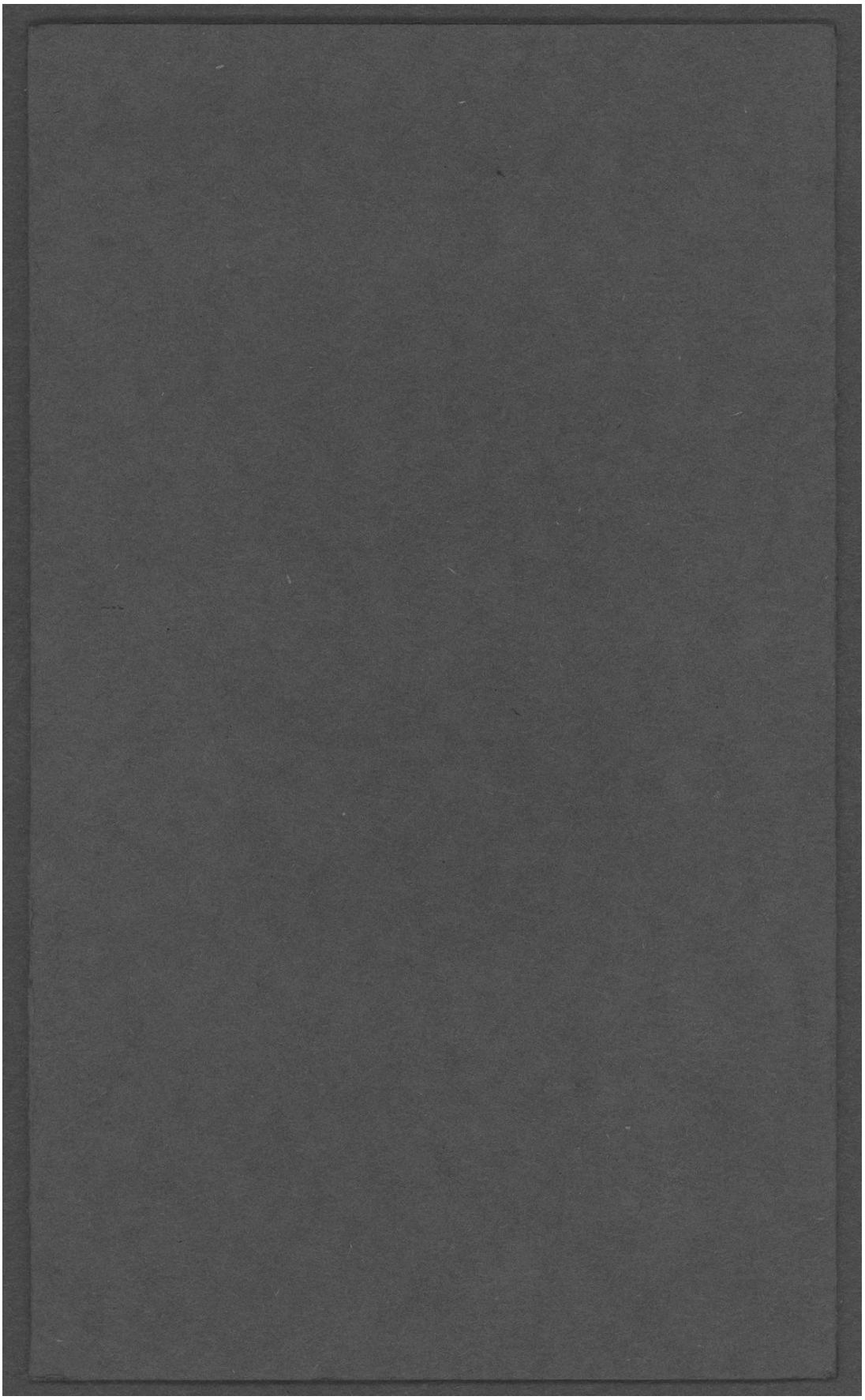
Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier

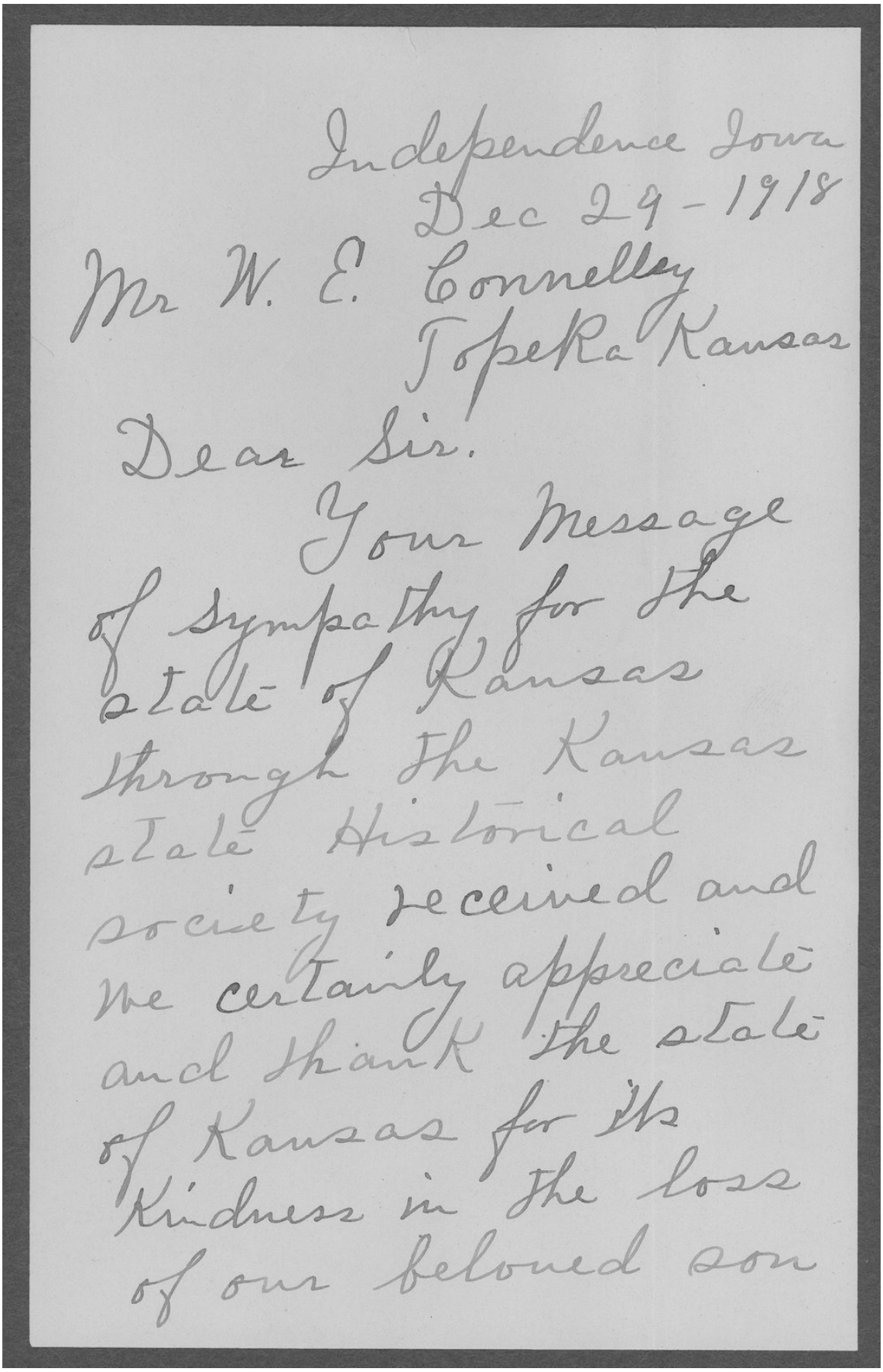


Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier



Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier





Independence Iowa
Dec 29 - 1918

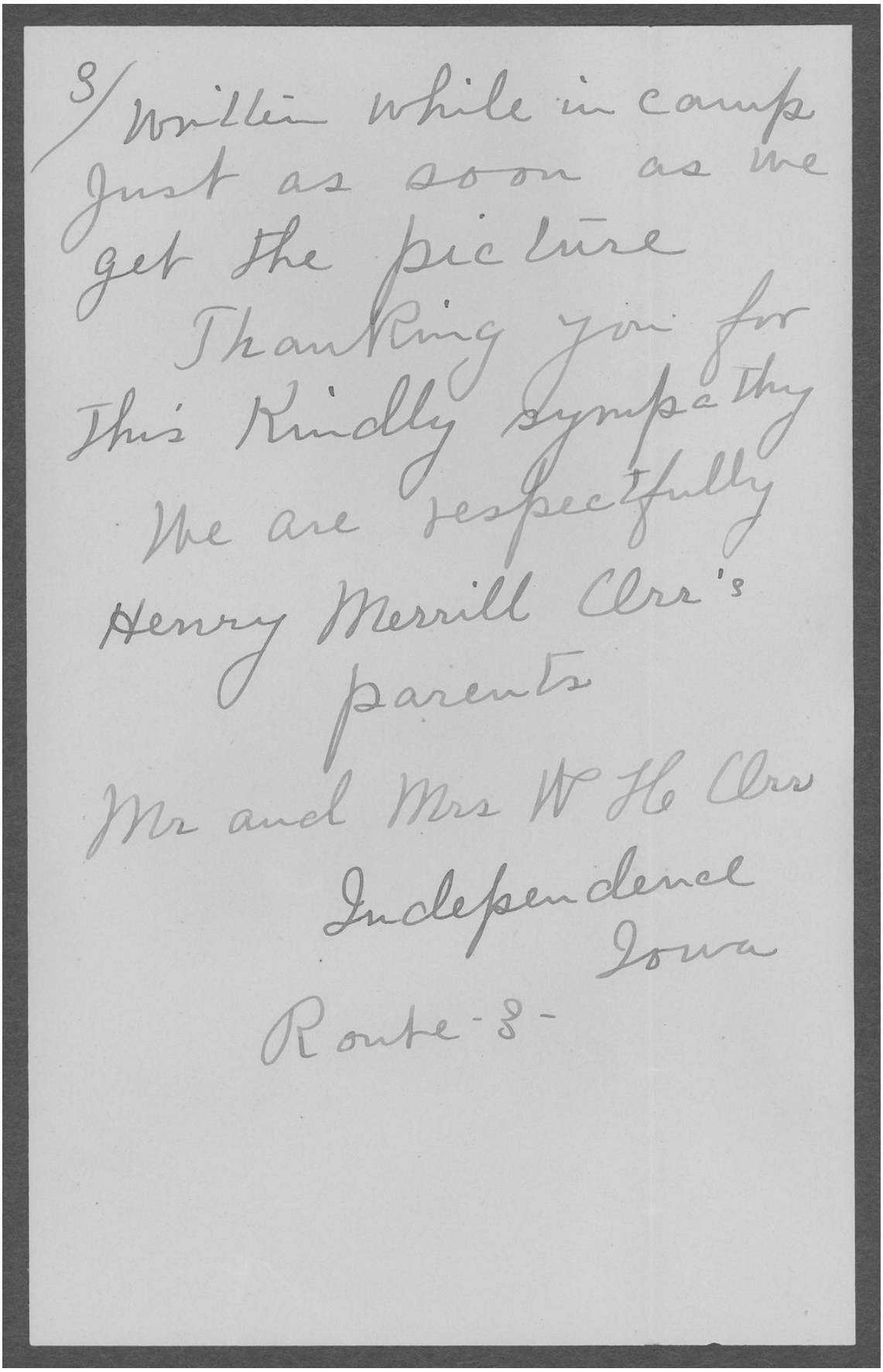
Mr W. E. Connelley
Topeka Kansas

Dear Sir.

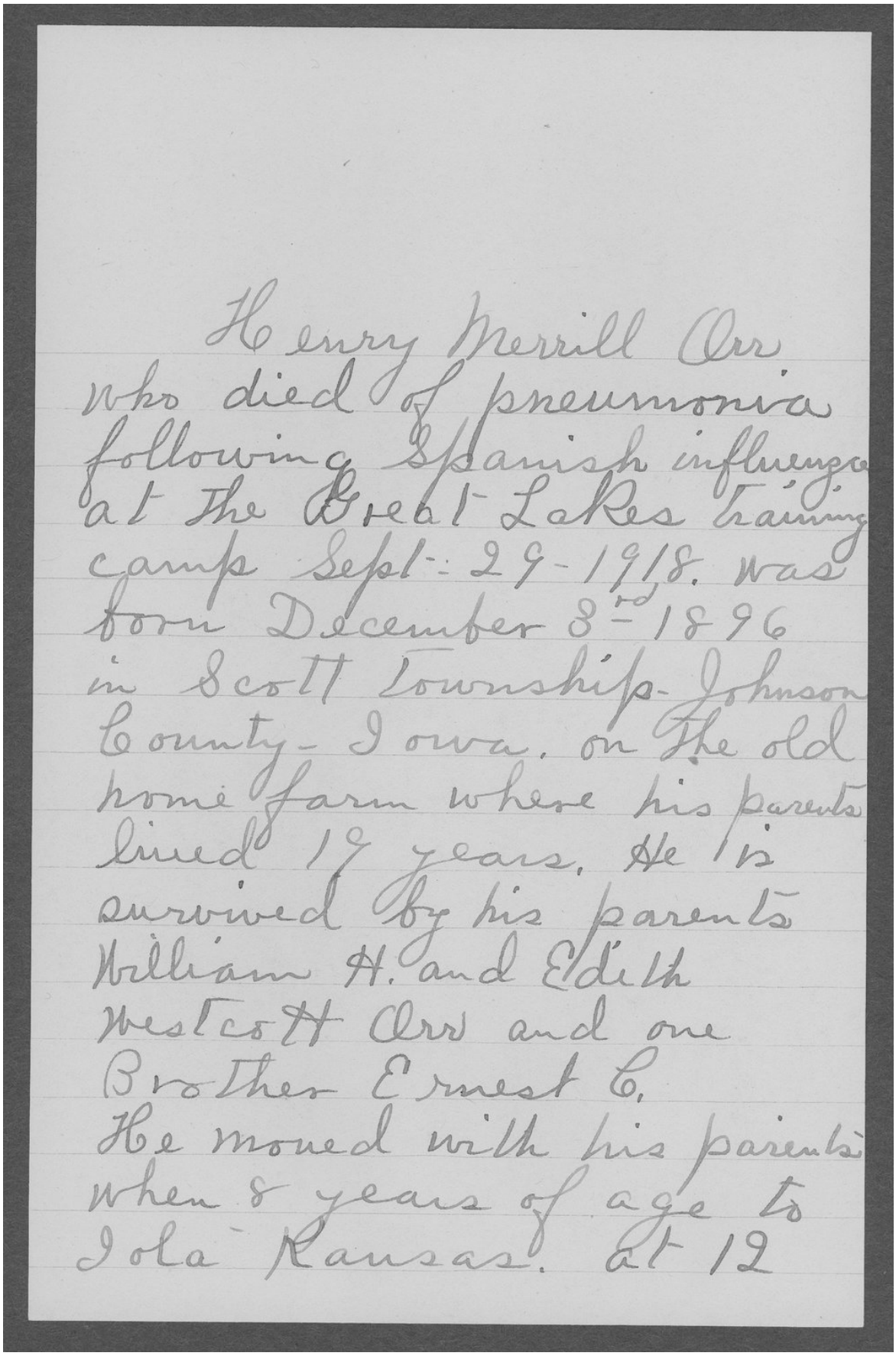
Your Message of Sympathy for the state of Kansas through the Kansas state Historical society received and we certainly appreciate and thank the state of Kansas for its Kindness in the loss of our beloved son

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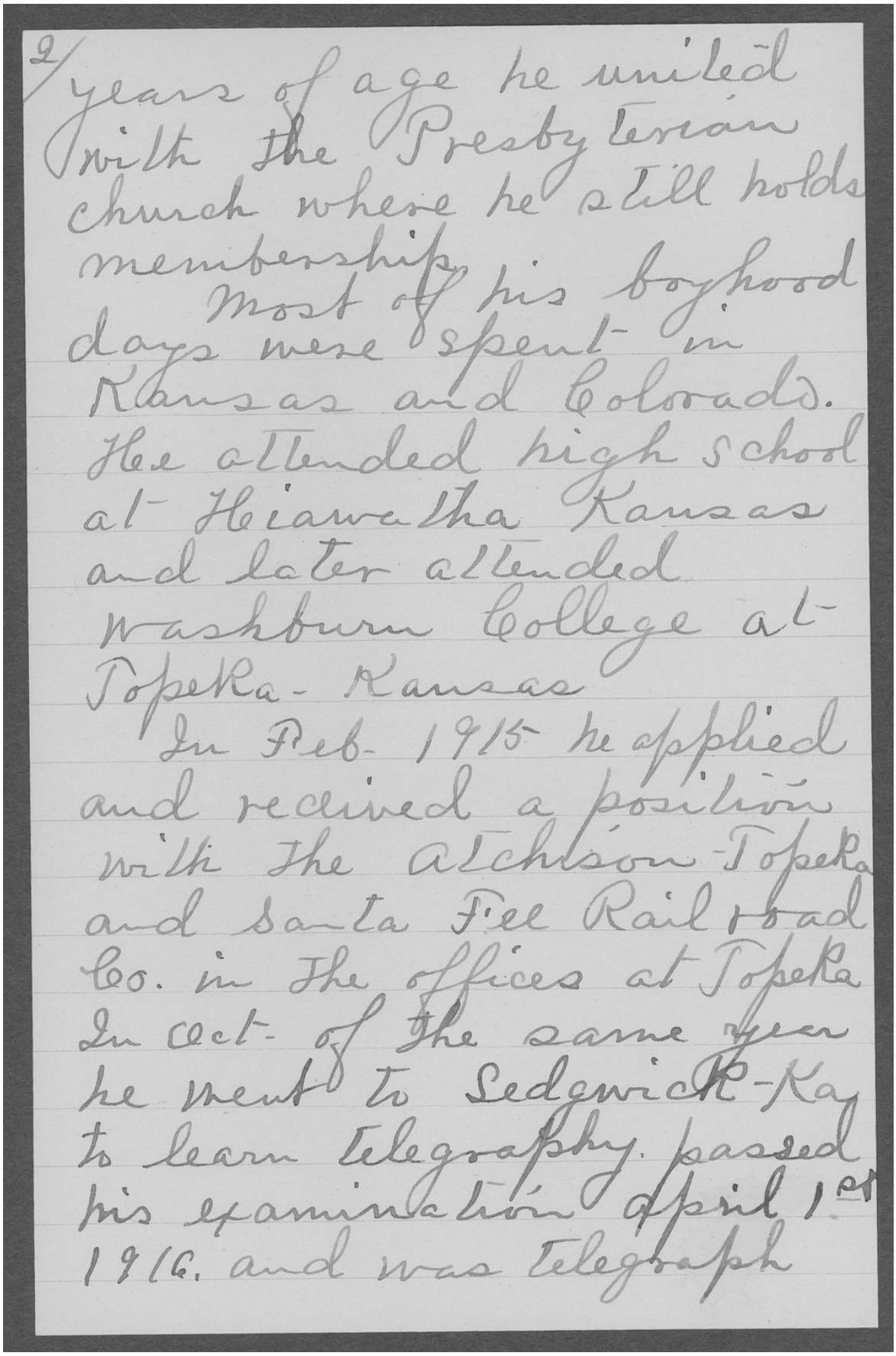
Henry Merrill Orrs.
We can not at this
writing send you the
picture asked for
but will in a short-
time, as we had to
have some taken
from a negative we
had but on account
of the usual holiday
rush could not get
them as soon but
will send the picture
sketch of his life and
extracts from letters



S/ Willie while in camp
Just as soon as we
get the picture
Thanking you for
This Kindly Sympathy
We are respectfully
Henry Merrill Orr's
parents
Mr and Mrs W H Orr
Independence
Iowa
Route-3-



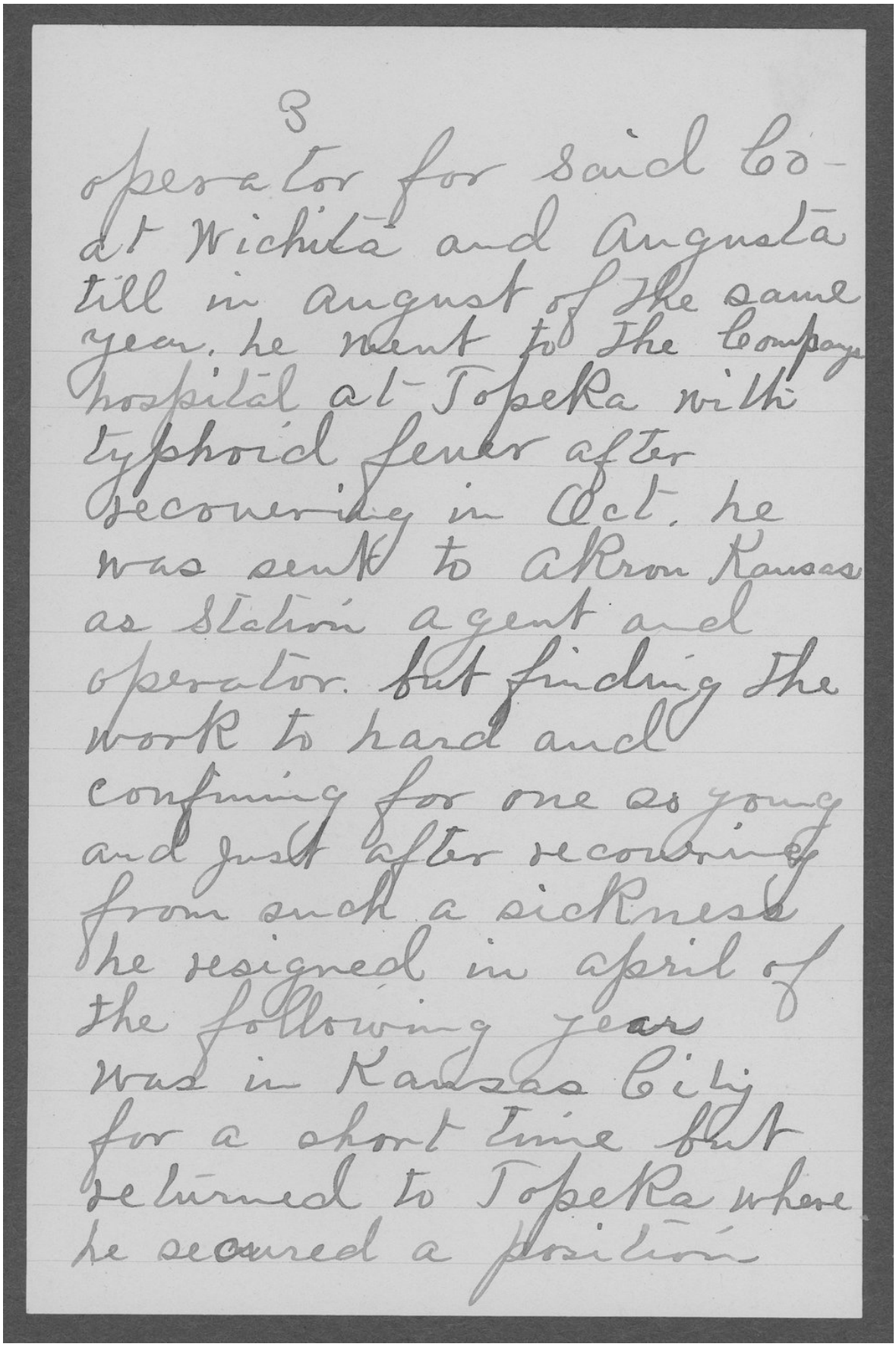
Henry Merrill Orr
who died of pneumonia
following Spanish influenza
at the Great Lakes training
camp Sept. 29-1918. Was
born December 8th 1896
in Scott Township-Johnson
County-Iowa. on the old
home farm where his parents
lived 19 years. He is
survived by his parents
William H. and Edith
Westcott Orr and one
Brother Ernest C.
He moved with his parents
when 8 years of age to
Iola Kansas. at 12



2/ years of age he united with the Presbyterian church where he still holds membership.

Most of his boyhood days were spent in Kansas and Colorado. Hee attended high school at Hiawatha Kansas and later attended Washburn College at Topeka - Kansas

In Feb- 1915 he applied and received a position with The Atchison-Topeka and Santa Fee Rail road Co. in The offices at Topeka In oct- of the same year he went to Sedgwick-Kan to learn telegraphy. passed his examination April 1st 1916. and was Telegraph

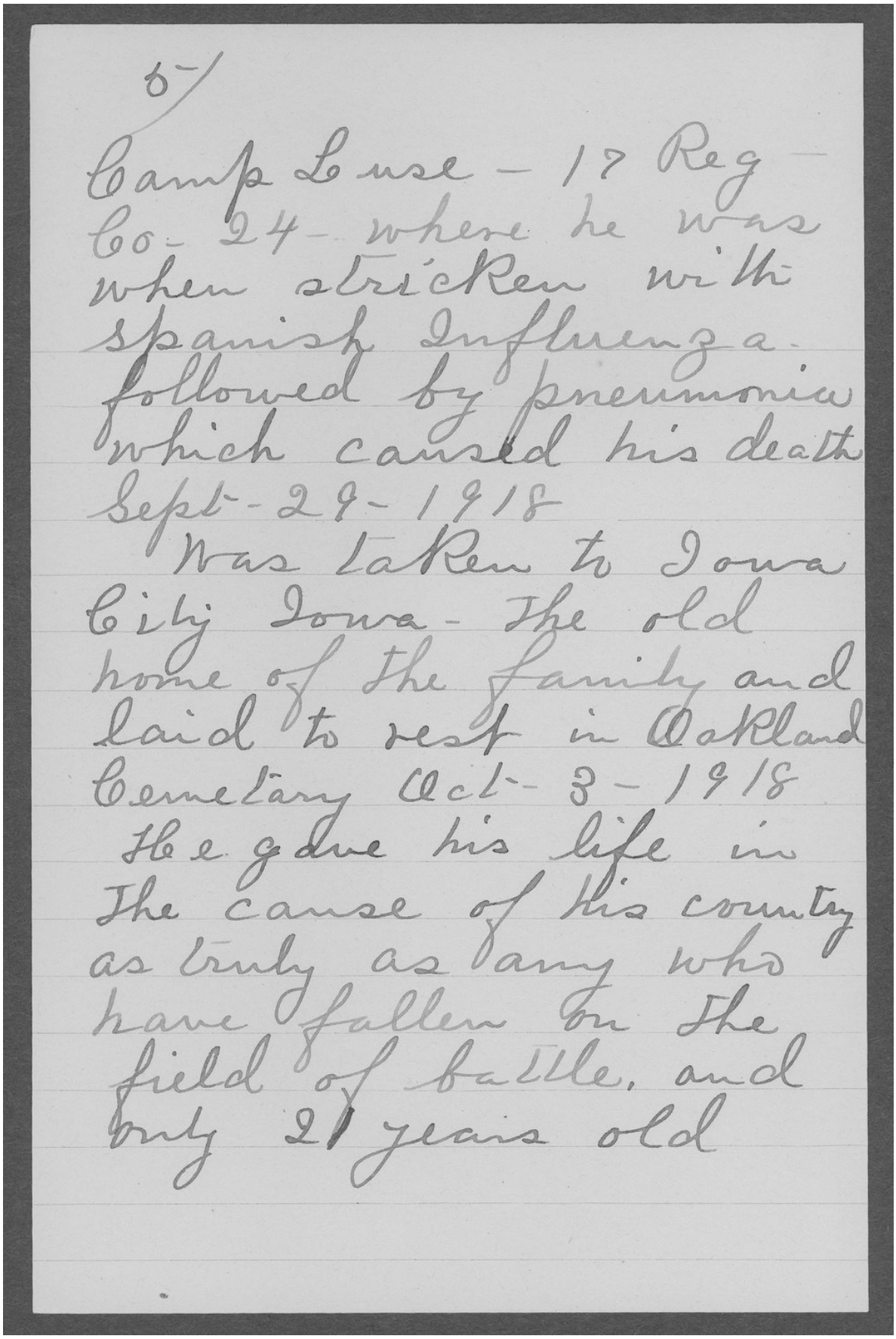


9

operator for said Co-
at Wichita and Augusta
till in august of the same
year. he went to the Company
hospital at Topeka with
typhoid fever after
recovering in Oct. he
was sent to Akron Kansas
as Station agent and
operator. but finding the
work to hard and
confining for one so young
and just after recovering
from such a sickness
he resigned in april of
the following years
was in Kansas City
for a short time but
returned to Topeka where
he secured a position

4

with The W A. L. Thompson hard ware firm as assistant Secretary and Treasurer where he still was at the time of his Enlistment ment to Kansas City and enlisted in the U. N. S. R. F. in the Navy July 9 - 1918 was called to The Colors. and arrived at Great Lakes. Naval Traning Station - Great Lakes Ills July 31st - was first stationed at Camp. Decatur. Company 476 August 16: transferred to Camp Perry - Co. D - 6th Reg Aug 29th transfered to New Isolation Camp. Co. 26 - Reg 16 - Sept - 13th transferred to

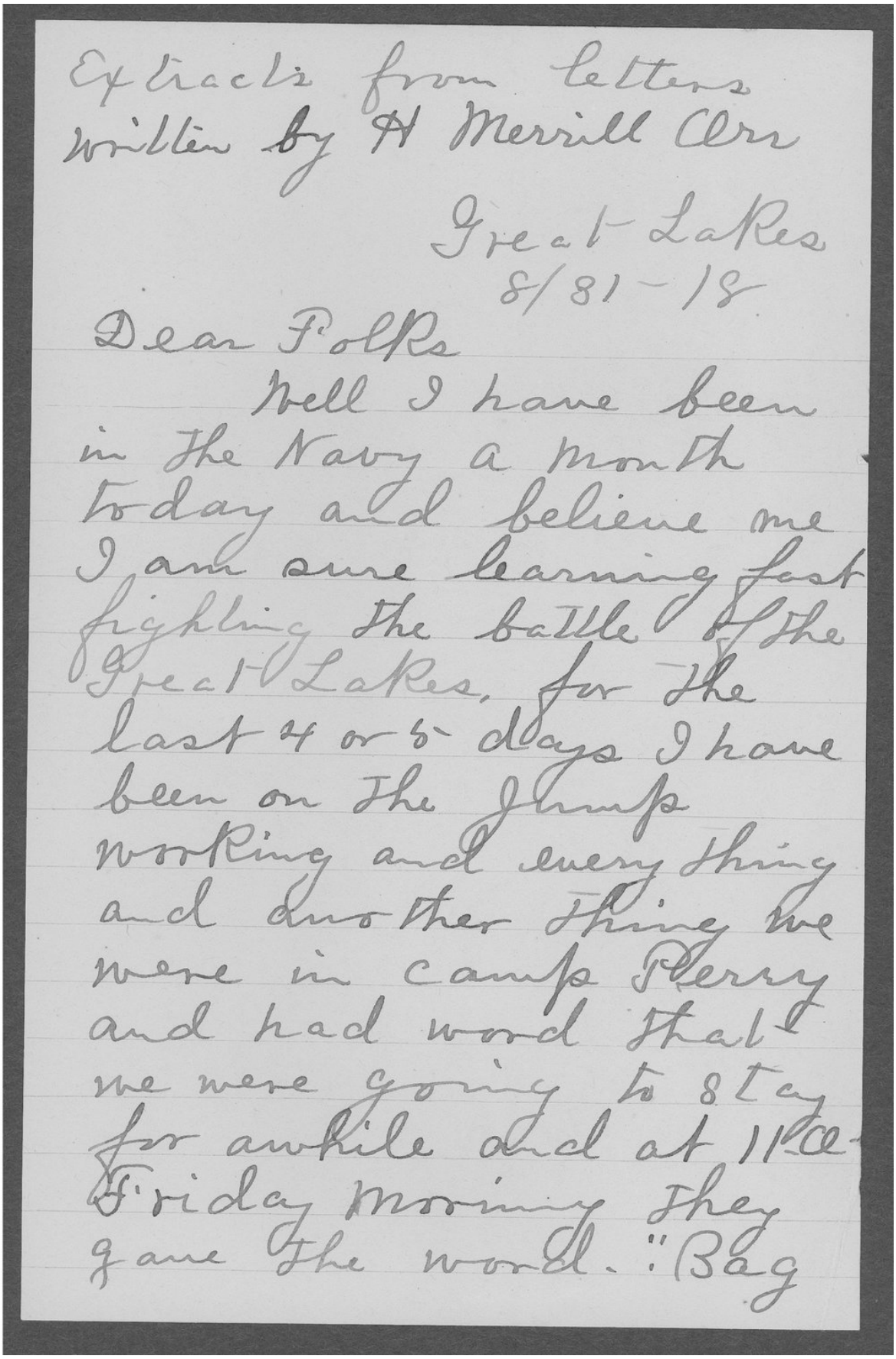


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Camp Louse – 17 Reg –
Co- 24 – where he was
when stricken with
Spanish Influenza
followed by pneumonia
which caused his death
Sept- 29- 1918

Was taken to Iowa
City Iowa – The old
home of the family and
laid to rest in Oakland
Cemetary Oct- 3 – 1918

He gave his life in
The cause of this county
as truly as any who
have fallen on the
field of battle, and
only 21 years old

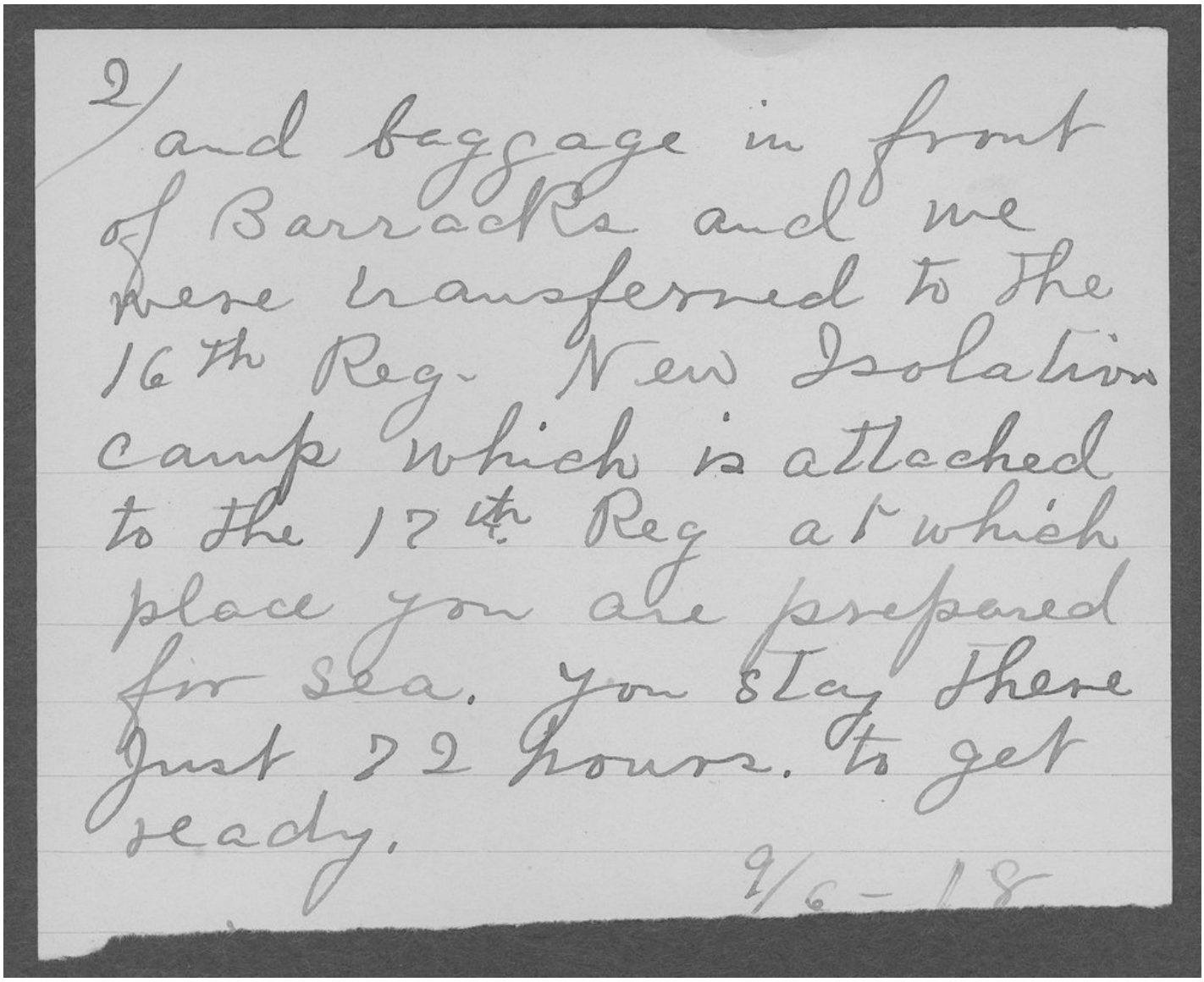


Extracts from letters
written by H Merrill Orr

Great LaRes
8/81-18

Dear Folks

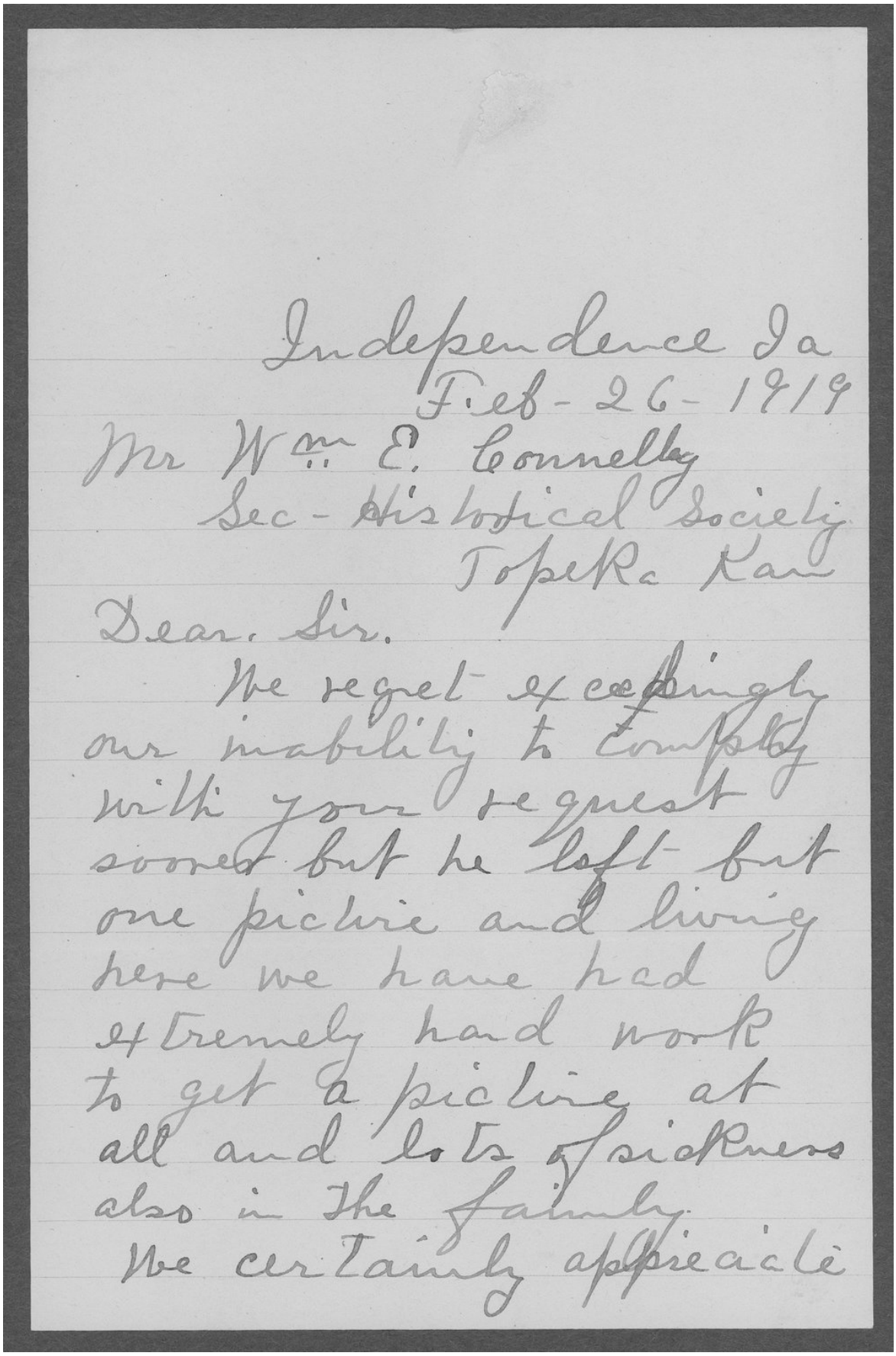
Well I have been
in the Navy a month
today and believe me
I am sure learning fast
fighting the battle of the
Great LaRes, for the
last 4 or 5 days I have
been on the Jump
working and every thing
and another thing we
were in camp Perry
and had word that
we were going to stay
for awhile and at 11 o-
Friday morning they
gave the word. "Bag



2/

and baggage in front of Barracks and we were transferred to the 16th Reg. New Isolation camp which is attached to the 17th Reg at which place you are prepared for sea. You stay there just 72 hours. to get ready.

9/6-18



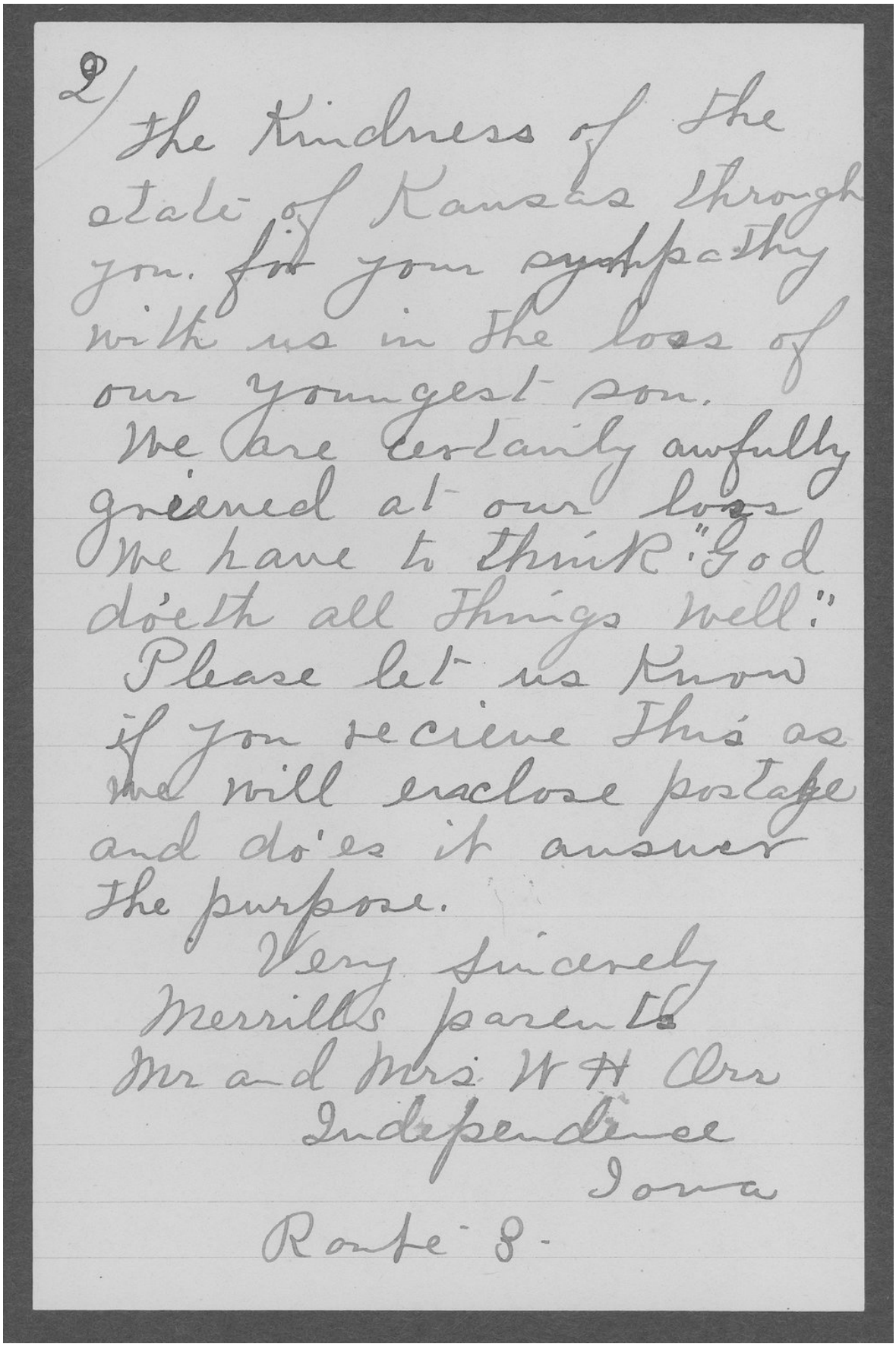
Independence Ia
Feb - 26 - 1919

Mr Wm E. Connelley
Sec - Historical Society
Topeka Kan

Dear Sir.

We regret exceedingly our inability to comply with your request sooner but he left but one picture and living here we have had extremely hard work to get a picture at all and lots of sickness also in the family.

We certainly appreciate



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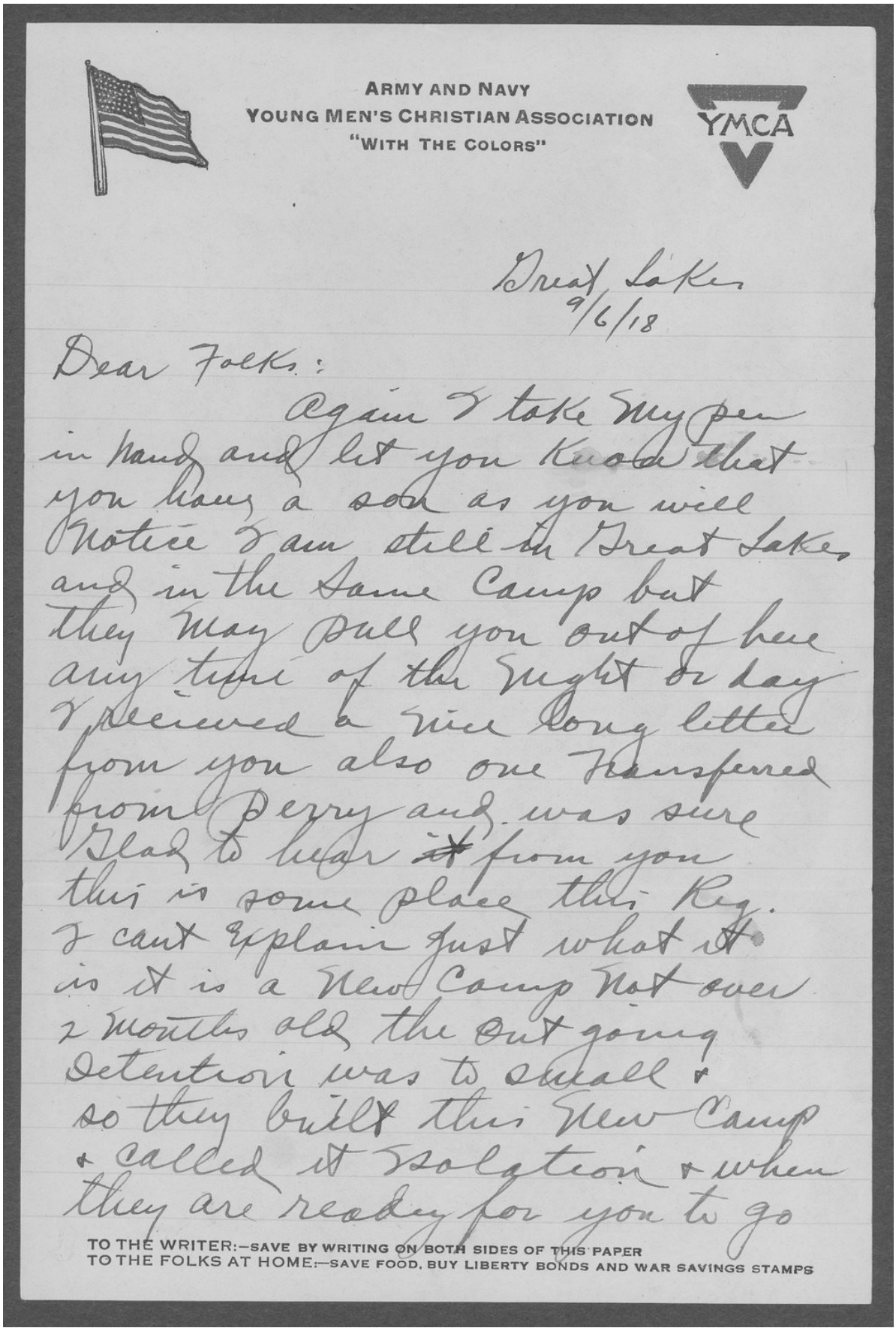
The kindness of the state of Kansas through you. for your sympathy with us in the loss of our youngest son.

We are certainly awfully grieved at our loss We have to think "God doeth all things well."

Please let us know if you recieve this as we will enclose postage and does it answer the purpose.

Very sincerely
Merrills parents
Mr and Mrs W H Orr
Independence
Iowa
Route 8.

Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier



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

YMCA

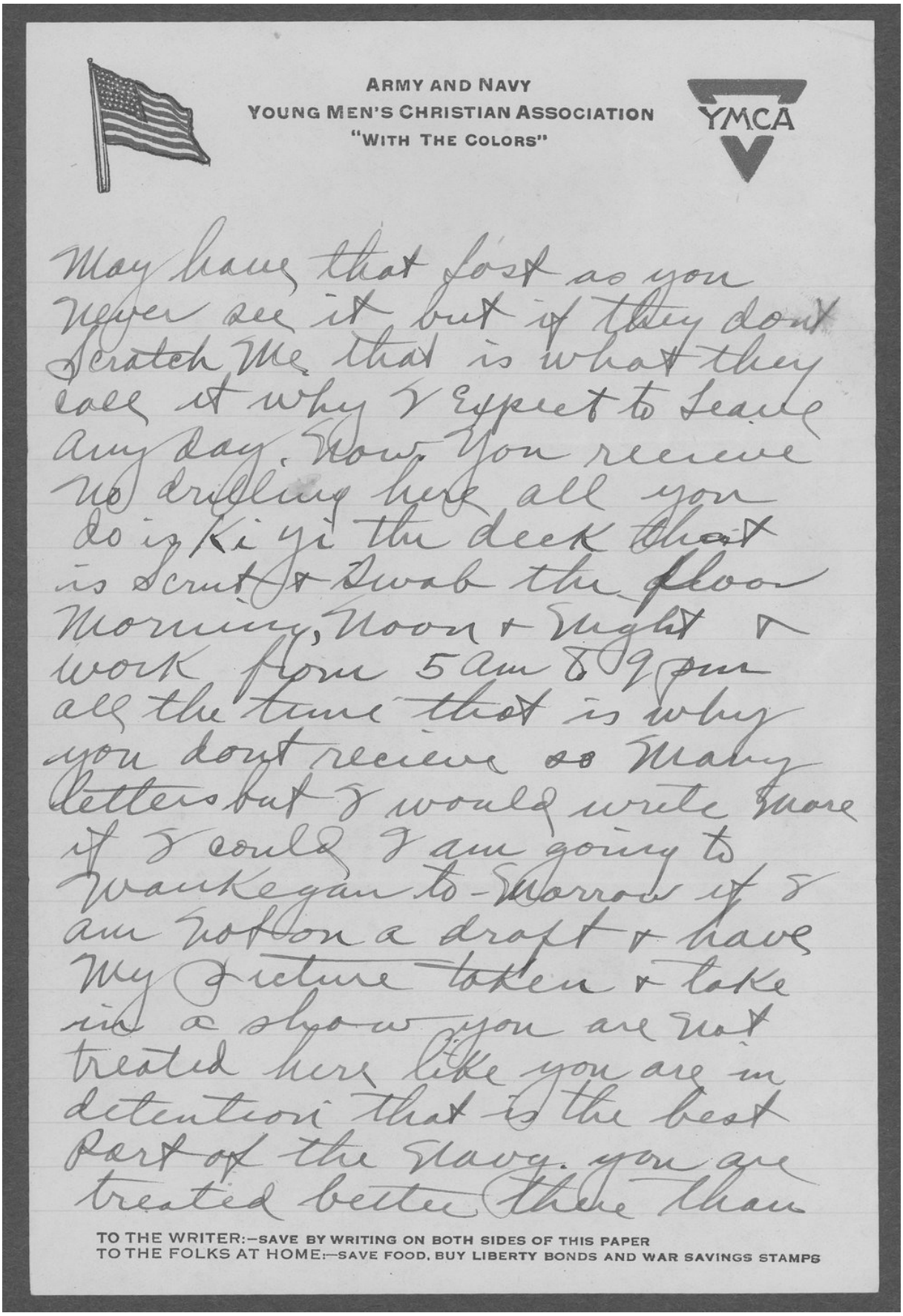
Great Lakes
9/6/18

Dear Folks:

Again I take my pen in hand and let you know that you have a sob as you will notice I am still in Great Lakes and in the same Camp but they may pull you out of here any time of the night or day I received a nice long letter from you also one transfered from Perry and was sure glad to hear ~~it~~ from you this is some place this Reg. I can't explain just what it is it is a New Camp Not over 2 months old the Out going detention was to small so they built this New Camp & called it Isolation & when they are ready for you to go

TO THE WRITER:—SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER
TO THE FOLKS AT HOME:—SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

to Sea or another Camp for
further transfer why they
send you here you are generally
called within a week after
you arrive sometimes it's a
day but after you are
called in a draft you
may be transferred to
the outgoing detention &
then sent back as your
records may be lost you
see where they handle
so many men they loose
some things & when they loose
your records of service why
you are out of luck & are
stuck away in a Corner until
things are found you know
in the Navy from the day you
start until you stop you
have a book or Service
Record that travels along
with you that gives all
the particulars of you
so if or any one else

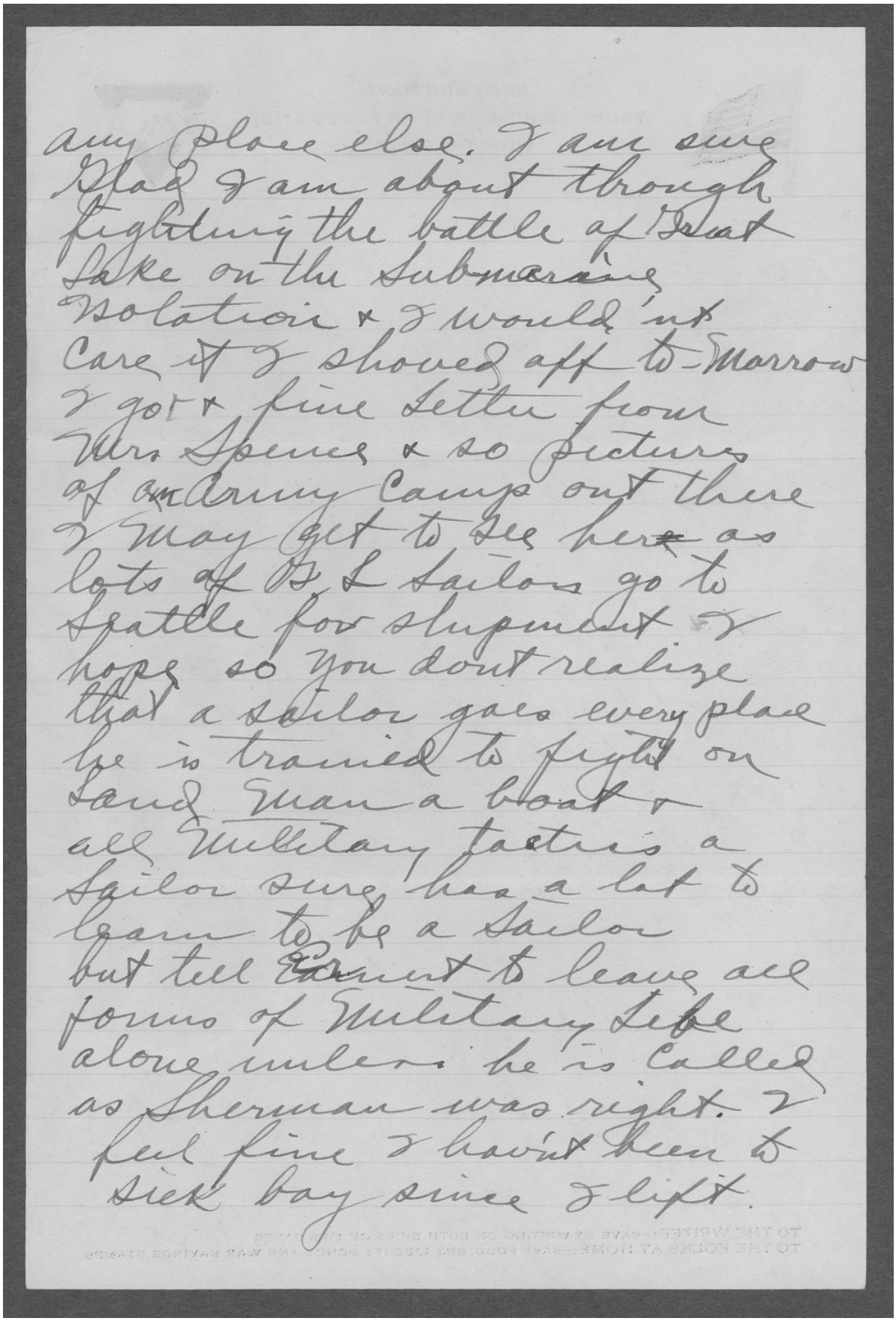


ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"

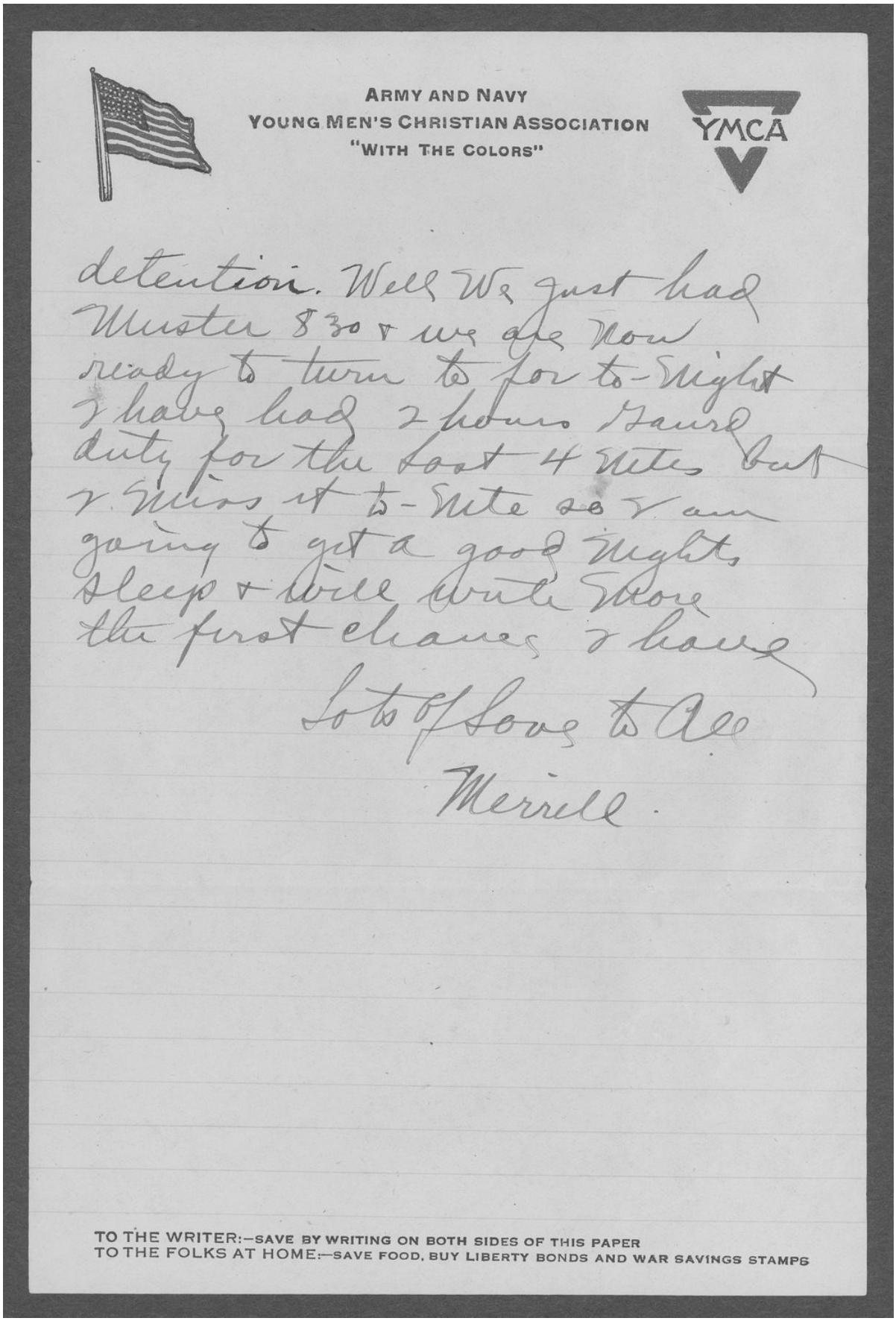
YMCA

May have that last as you never see it but if they don't scratch me that is what they call it why I expect to leave any day. Now you receive no drilling here all you do is ki yi the deck that is scrub & swab the floor morning, noon & night & work from 5 am & 9 pm all the time that is why you don't receive so many letters but I would write more if I could I am going to Waukegan to-morrow if I am not on a draft & have my picture taken & take it & show you are not treated here like you are in detention that is the best part of the Navy. you are treated better there than

TO THE WRITER:—SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER
TO THE FOLKS AT HOME:—SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS



any place else. I am sure
Glad I am about through
fighting the battle of Great
Lake on the Submarine
Solation & I would'nt
Care if I showed aff to-Morrow
I got a fine letter from
Mrs Spence & so Pictures
of Army Camps out there
I may get to see here as
lots of U. S. Sailors go to
Seattle for Stupendt &
hope so You dont realize
that a Sailor goes every place
he is trained to fight on
land Man a boat &
all Military Tactics a
Sailor sure has a lot to
learn to be a Sailor
but tell Emmett to leave all
forms of Military Life
alone unless he is called
as Sherman was right. I
feel fine & havn't been to
Sick bay since I left.



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

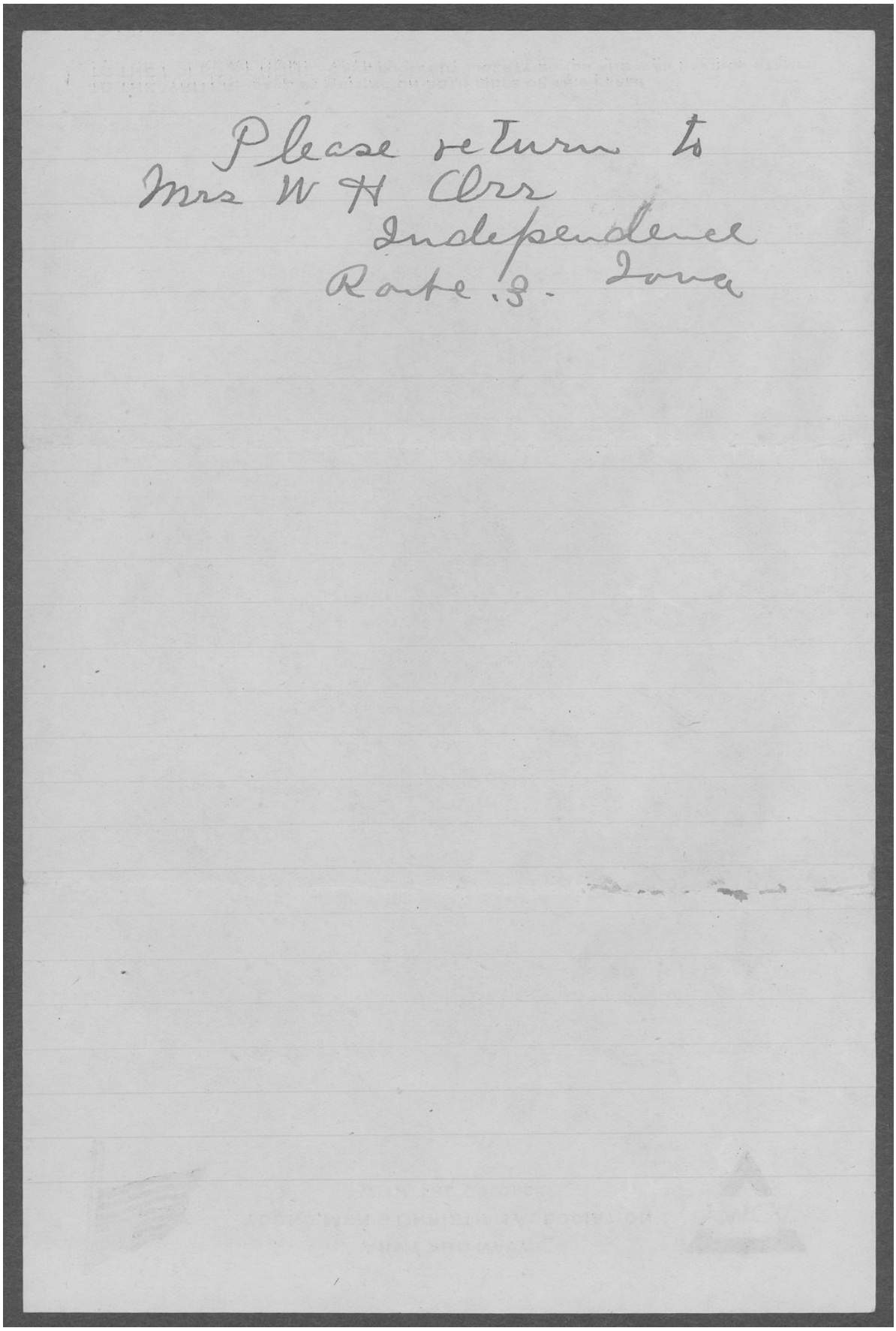
YMCA

detention. Well We just had Muster 8:30 & we are now ready to turn in for to-night I have had 2 hours Guard duty for the last 4 Nites but I miss it to-Nite so I am going to get a good Nights sleep & will write more the first chance I have

Lots of love to All

Merrill.

TO THE WRITER:—SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER
TO THE FOLKS AT HOME:—SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS


Please return to
Mrs W H Orr
Independence
Route 3. Iowa

Henry Merrill Orr, World War I soldier

