

Kansas Memory



Walter Vernon Pirtle collection

Section 2, Pages 31 - 60

Letters written by Walter Vernon Pirtle to Louise Covey, Cullison, Kansas. The letters dated August-December, 1917, were written in Pratt, Kansas, where Walter was working for the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. His letter of January 20, 1918, first mentions joining the U. S. Army and World War I. The March 3, 1918, letter was written from Camp Funston where he belonged to the Machine Gun Company 353rd Infantry, 89th Division. By June 5, 1918, he was on his way across the Atlantic Ocean to France. His letters written from July 1918 through April 1919 contain information about the war. After hostilities ceased on November 11, 1918, Walter's company assumed guard duty in the occupation force near Trier and Cologne, Germany. His last letter written from Germany is dated April 30, 1919. The 89th Division returned to America in the spring of 1919. Walter was mustered out on June 2, 1919, after fifteen months of service. Also included with the letters are postcards of Trier, Germany.

Date: 1917 - 1919

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tomorrow (Wed),

Blanche was in Pratt yesterday
to get her ~~to~~ belonging away
to the farm home of her
father Mr. Wm Konkle, said she
hadn't heard from Ray &
would die if I did not hear
from you in that length
of time.

I will go now and drop this
in the office and then turn
in for the day, I am sorry
that I can't get off Sat. night
but I am caught this time.

Looking for a letter,

Yours faithfully,

Bye By xxxxxxxxx

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you do you know that. But it can't be helped this time. Did Geo tell you why el could not come down this evening, only yesterday we got two car loads of material in and one of them had to be unloaded today and it taken all day until six 15, and there was no one to take my place if I had known it in time I could of played off on the Boss ha, ha! the same old luck isn't it dear but we will be in better luck sometime.

Pratt Trans.
Sept. last '17

My Dearest:-

Now if I can't talk to you el guess I can write you a letter see this is an answer to that letter that el looked for me, seat and it did not arrive, what was the matter with it,

Soon does Pratt look to you, good as ever, and that has a real fine chat that we had this

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evening wasn't it, When I went over to Roy's you were gone I don't know how long you had been gone, but Roy says your folks are gone, and I know that before I went it, In fact I expected that you would be gone by the way Geo. talked.
Say I wish I could of saw you I would of kept you here and I taken you out myself, why didn't you think of it, I sure wanted to see you awful bad, But say I don't see why you didn't write me a letter first and tell me that you were coming to town last night or today.
I wonder what you are doing about now are you home yet or not, it is just nine twenty, I stayed at Roy's and visit for some time, and Laura was over also, so we had quite a time altho. Cousin Laura was careful not to say any thing directly at me. Its hard to have your Cousin see at

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up on one of the walks and I
saw a couple standing near
a door step of a house, and as
I drew near I heard her say
well Ben you caught me in
a lie this time didn't you
and he said Darling elaborate to
think so. She ask him to forgive
her in so pitiful a manner
that I almost cried myself
I would of give a dollar to
of heard the rest of that conver-
sation, but nothing.

Say you are tired of this I
know so here goes to bed,
Say I am looking for that
letter love. I hope I get it tomorrow.
I am sure blue tonight just
to think you gone and I didn't
get to see you at all. but such
is life, write soon and often.

Your own now dear
Goodnight oceans of love
to ~~you~~ ~~you~~ ~~you~~ ~~you~~ ~~you~~ ~~you~~

Walter J.

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Euth was up tonight when I came from work, she has been pretty sick for about three days, but is on the safe side now I guess,

How do you like to shock ears it is some job don't you think good exercise if you follow it about sixteen hours a day for enough days poor George, if he goes to shocking all of that by himself.

I guess about Tuesday the Boss will go on the road to round up his business in other places and I will be alone for a few days all week at least.

How are all of the sick out there Aunt Clara, Arthur's kids Clays Bayly and all of the rest

I am about to go to sleep sitting here, and by the way I had a dream last night and it was so real I thought it was true even after I woke up and say we were not quarreling this time at all.

Last night I was walking along

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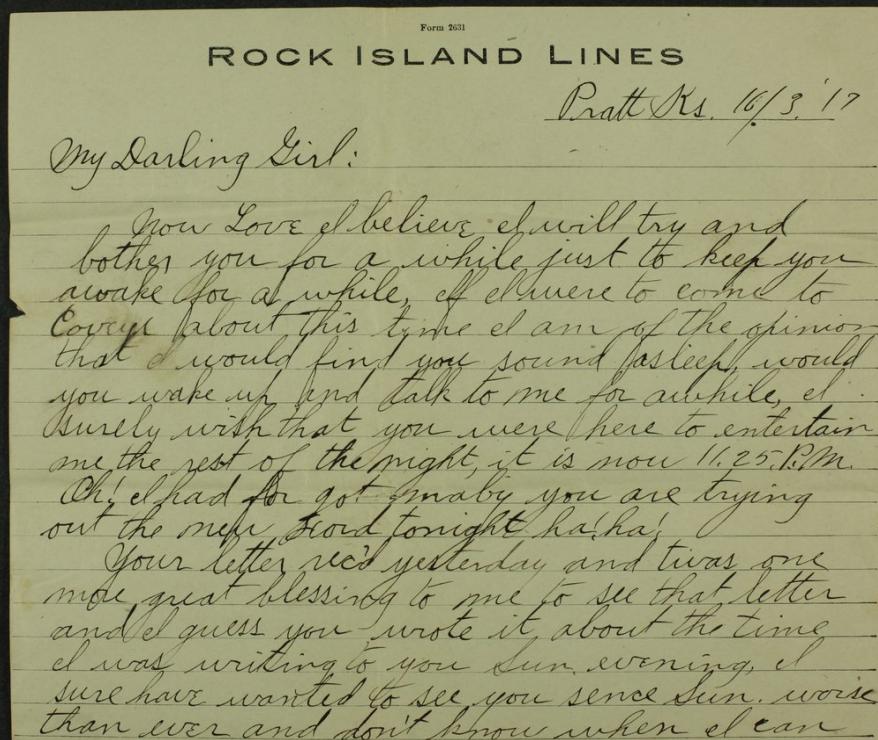


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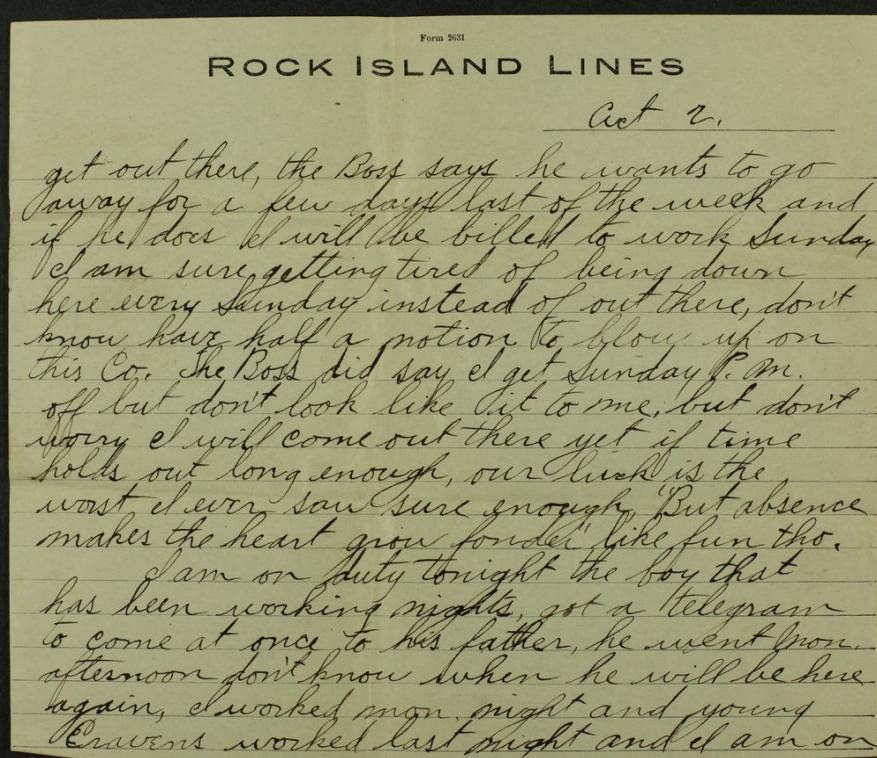


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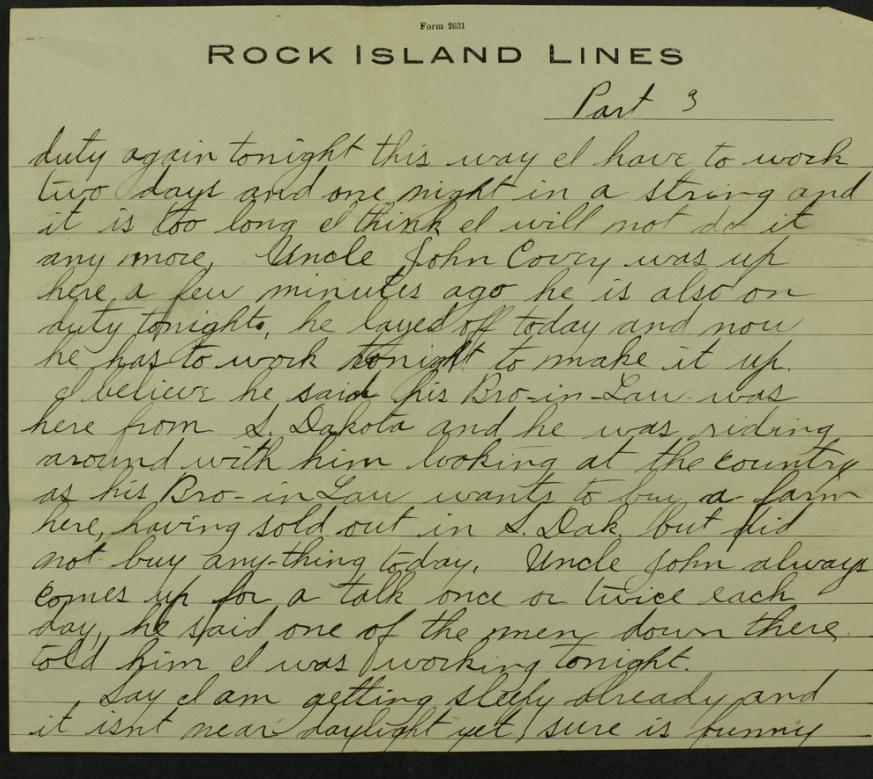


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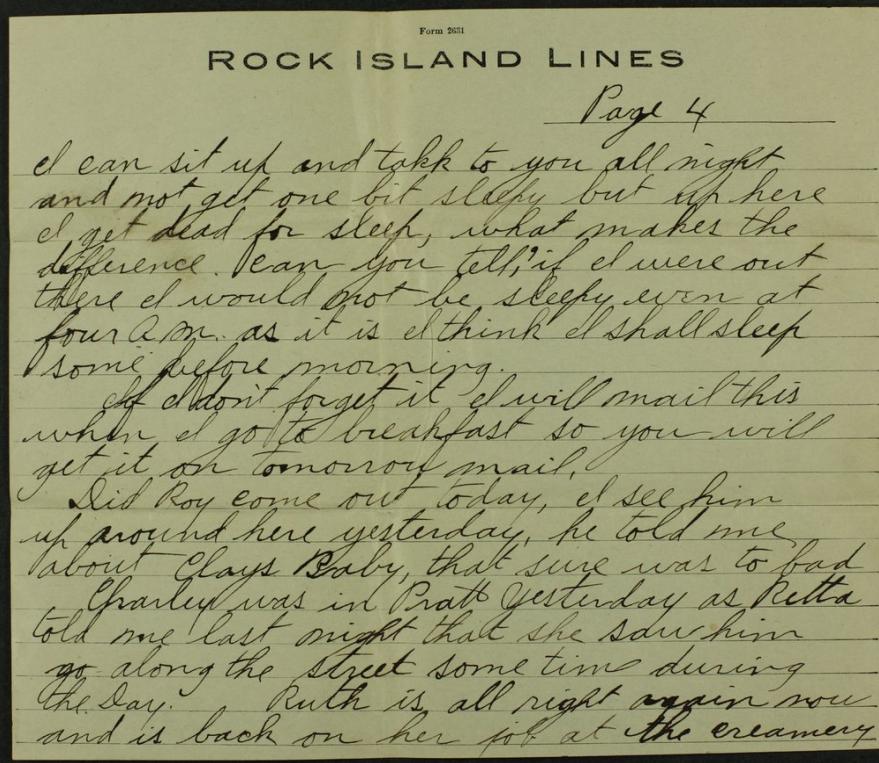


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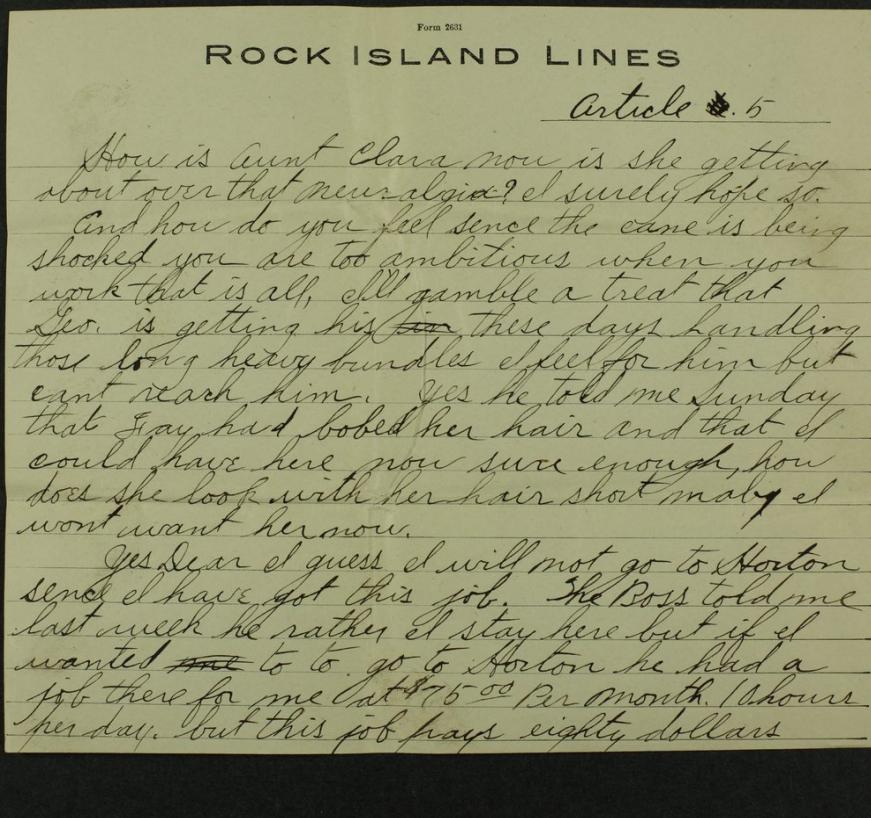


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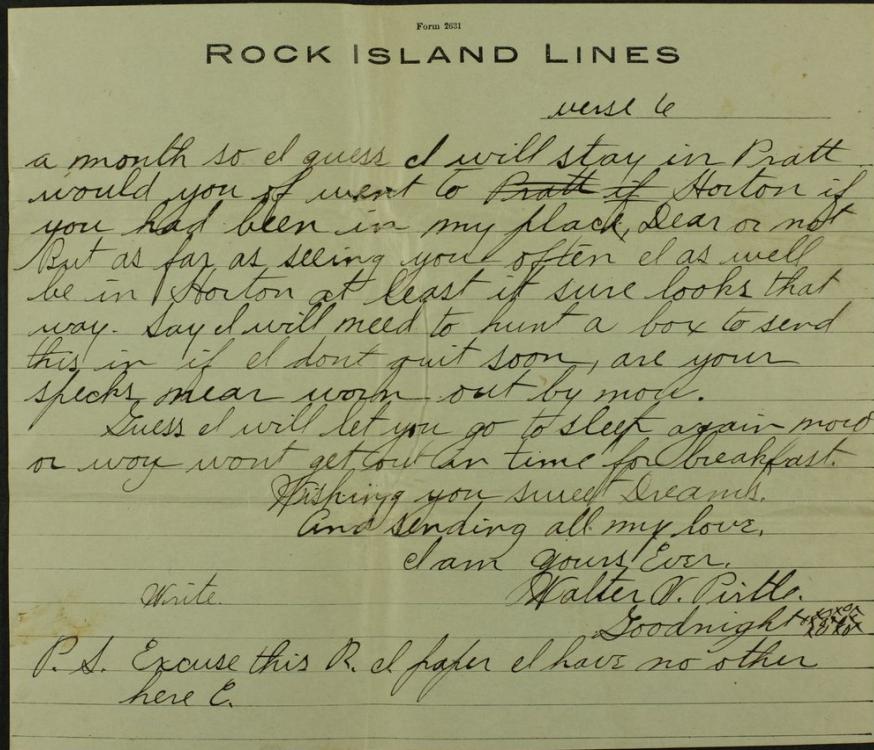


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there this afternoon but it would be my luck if I had come out to of found no one at home at all, that is how lucky I am, but say if I can make ends meet I will be out next Saturday night, I feel as though I could talk to you one whole week, if you come to town I will come down on 33. and if you are not tell me and I will be there any hour, see.

Yes Clifford is gone and poor Gladys she is in an awful state of mind

Patr. Trans.
Oct 7. 1917.

Dearest One:

Say love you can have no idea how glad I was when how glad I was when as I came by the P.O. this morn I came in and found that you, had written to me and a big long letter to at that, now you are ahead of me and I will have to write two tonight but two in one except it will be.

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I did not work this P.M. and I went over to Laras. Alton came in and told me that they had come in and brought Aunt Clara so I went over to see her she sure does look much better than she did when I saw her before, I guess she must intend to stay as she brought her trunk along in with her I did not get to see any of the rest as they did not stay until I got there. She didn't tell me much news as we were at Laras and Walter had company and beside that I did not stay long,

Where are you tonight and what are you doing for yourself are you at town or at home I will say you are in town just for a rough guess, but as Daddie is no doubt going out with you I think you will soon be on your way to the hills if I had known that you would be at home I would had some one to drive me out

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"And there are a bunch of us" to go to that place soon I don't know rather I will get among the first or not bit of course that is my luck, you know all of this forty don't have to go this time, it taken me on surprise when the Boss came, in I'm and told me el and him both belong to Uncle Sam Well el sure do hate to go but what can be done only go and of course it is go for we could have no other luck only that el shall go, dear it will be ~~one~~ the hardest things el ever done for all my life to bid you that last farewell I don't know rather el can do it or not but el will have to wont el S.H. just to think me me to be parted so soon is almost more than el can stand we have been together so little but it must be this way, but el can't see why, God knows tho, but maby el will get back, Yes I am most sure that Arthur will not have to go, but Forest

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I am afraid he is out of luck
I wonder when Howard will
have to go, say it would be
worth a hundred to me if el
could only get to jail with him
in the Army, or Geest either,
but of course they would not
put us together they might put
Arthur and el together but he
won't have to go. Well such is
life. Yes you can tell Dadie
and Geo. that they got my name
straight they had it wrote like
this ~~William~~ Walter Vernon Pirtle
I suppose after they wrote it
they found the mistake and
crossed off the William.
If el have to go the 15th I am
going home first and won't
have much time but don't get
alarmed el will be out there
and spend a few hours with you
before el go, but el am not gone
yet. But if you hear that el
got my notice to leave here on
the 15th. you will know that
el am already gone to see my
sister in Okla, now you

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notice that as said Sister not
Tootsie if Sister wasn't there
I wouldn't go, but of course
you won't believe that will you
Dear One, But it is true anyhow.
I must see Sister.

And you didn't go to the party
at all so didn't catch any new
beau, but wait kiddie I will
soon be gone to the army and
then

Well I should say that we had
big times those days about the
time that I was trying to put
you in the tank and those little
peevish spells only made us love
one another better don't you
think of home so anyhow, guess
will put you in there when I
come out. ha! ha! you don't think
I can do it do you?

Yes what was it you told me
the day I went out of the door you
forgot?

Well I got another wage raise
the other but it won't help me
much now I don't suppose it
will at that.

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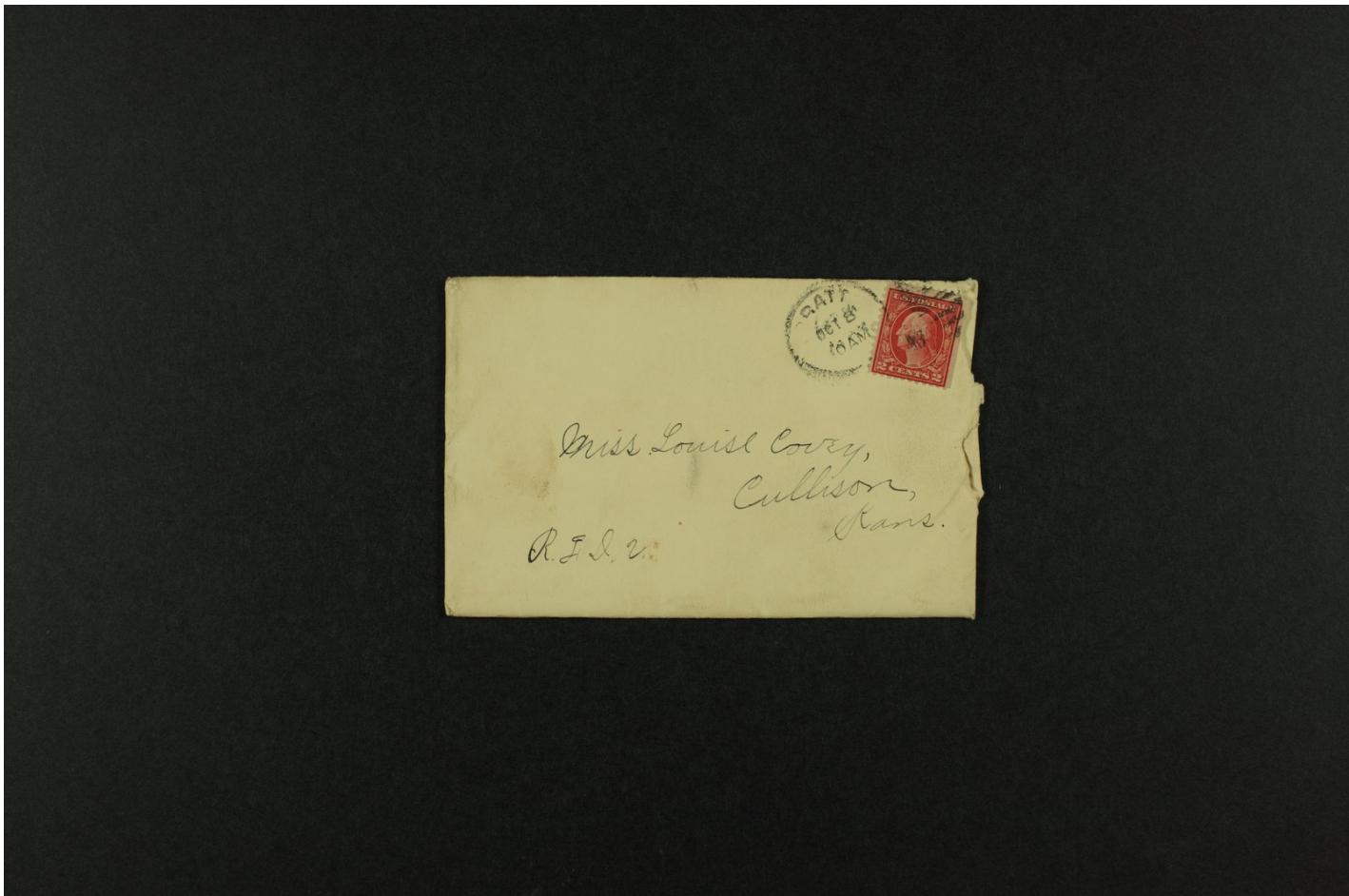
Well if I were out there I would
not go to bed till four o'clock
but as it is I believe I will
turn in, now write me often
and I won't let you get one
letter ahead of me this week.
I suppose Geo. will bring Arthur
in Tuesday and I will see them
then. And I will see you sat
evening see.

Looking for a letter
More love than ever,
Goodnight XXXX
Walter.

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went wrong ell bet el
made her son by the remark
I made about her hair. You
you tell me it is difficult you
now you can tell her
I am sorry if I take to many
instead of her like so much
fun thought.

Well for el sit down
here to write you a big
long letter I thought I'd
make up for that other
short letter I wrote but
the boss made me go to
town with him so now
it is too late when I get
your letter I will write
the rest of this one see dear

3137
South Park St.

Pratt, Kans.
Oct 15, 1917.

My Darling Girl:
Here I am girl back.
To talk to you for awhile
before chutie, You is
every thing out on the
farm tonight and to day?
What things have passed
along nicely.

Surely this has been a
long lonesome day for me
the worst yet and sometime
I stopped work for a minute
I found my mind wonder
not to go hills to you I
would enjoy being out there
tonight but it wouldn't

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do for me to be here every night
we would both die for sleep in
a short time I am thinking,

What time did you get home
last night I suppose you stayed
until after church didn't you
I believe the last time I saw
you, you were cranking the Ford
I was watching you as I moved
away, I went over to Koy's last
night after I got in and found
till about eight o'clock had a
good visit with the folks they
are all in good shape as far
as I know, Leo is going to
school he I guess lost his job
the way I understand the affair

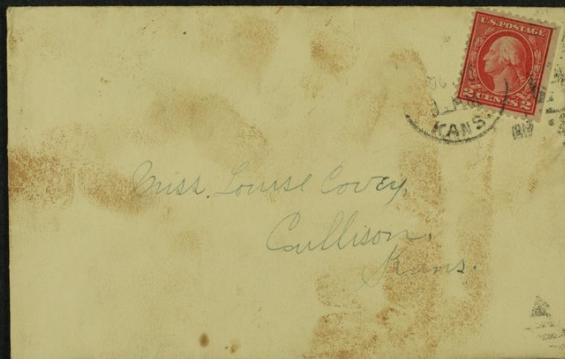
I did not hear from my
exemption at all yet closure
do wish I could hear soon I
am getting real anxious to
know how it is to come out
I am afraid it won't work
out very good you know that
is my luck.

Is Dadie out there this week
I guess he is I believe Leo said
he was coming out.

Say Louise did you see Gay any
more last night, I wonder what

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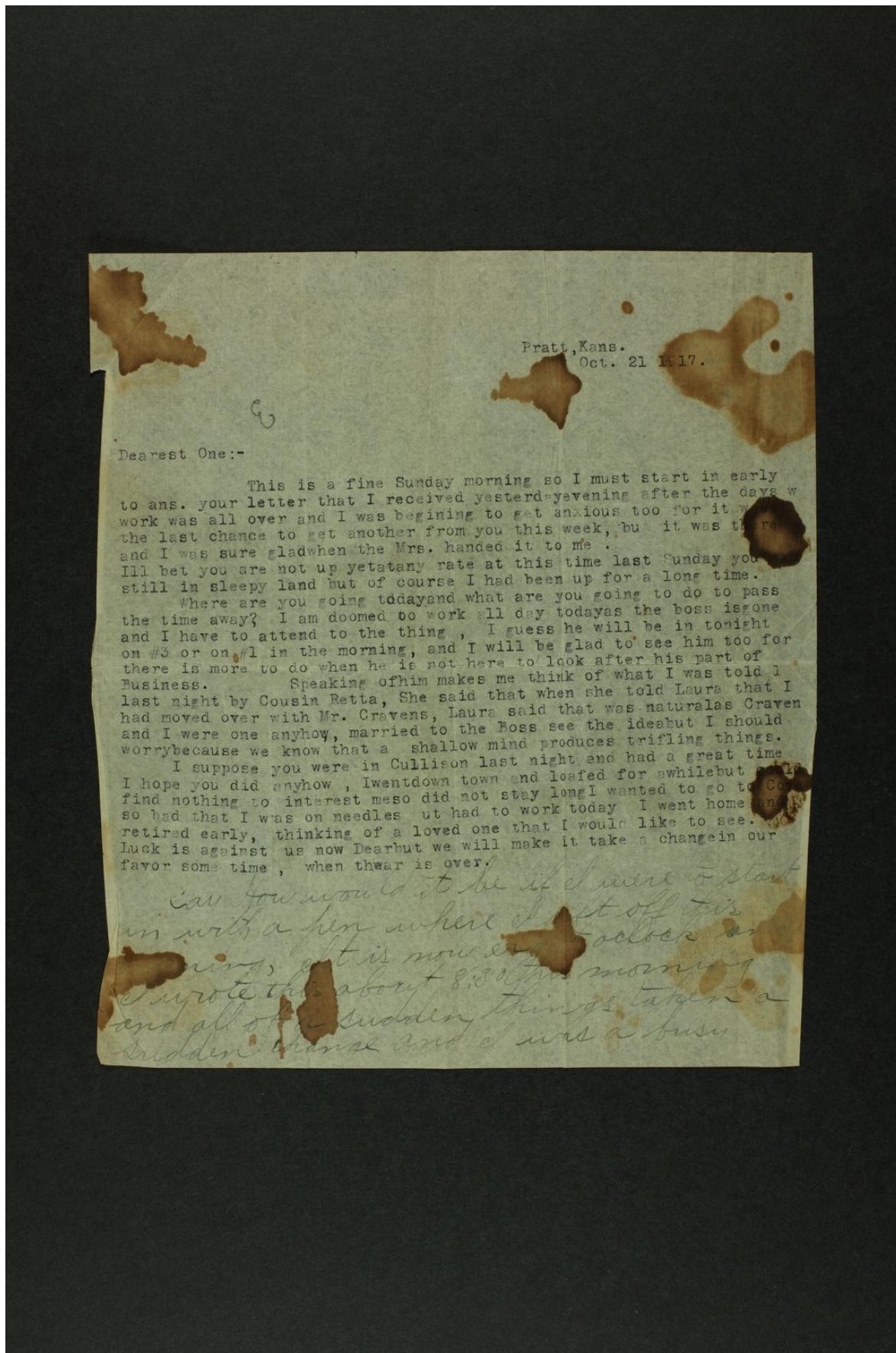


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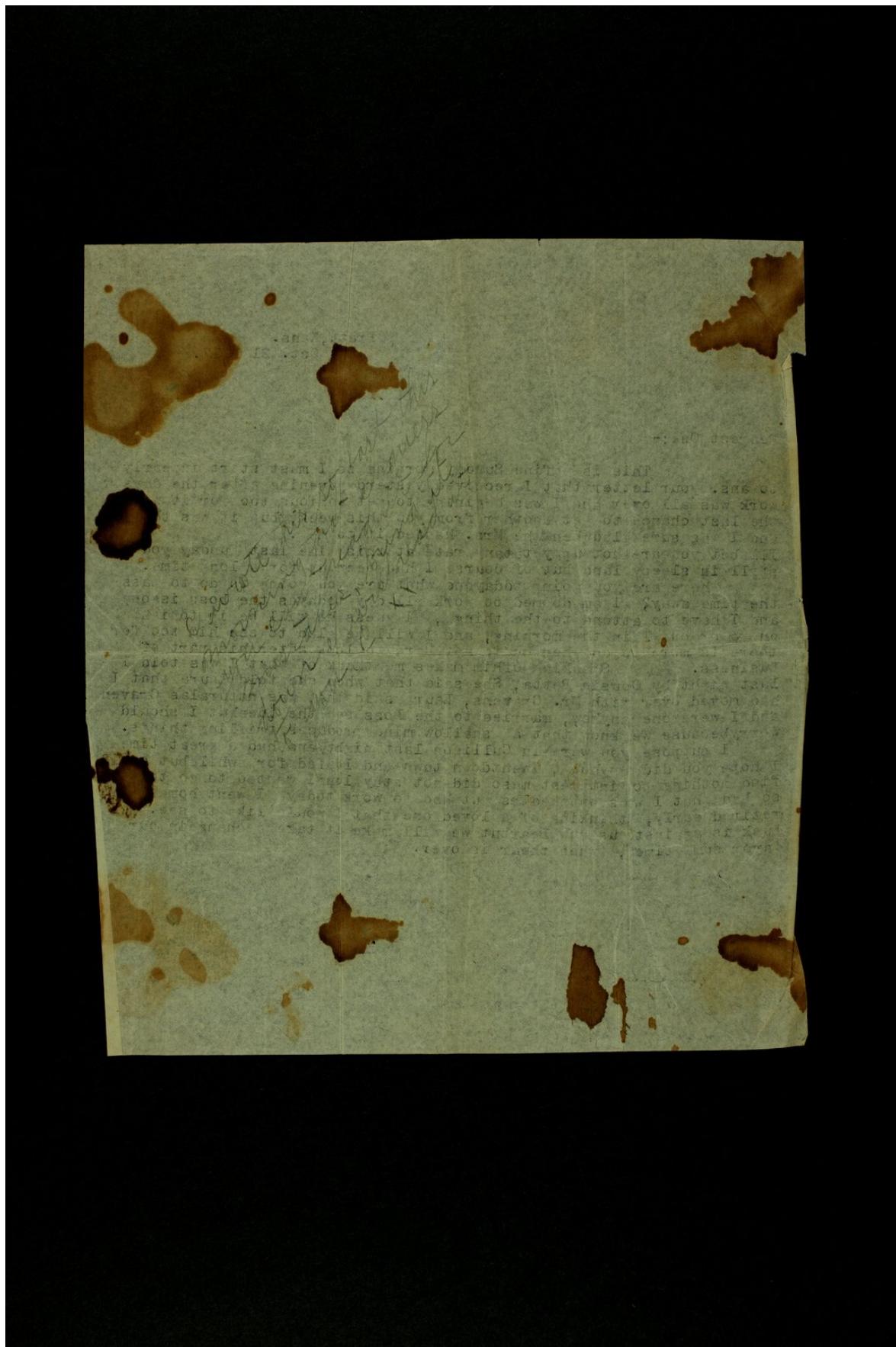


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Boy all the rest of the day and ⁽²⁾
that was when I missed the
Boss had it all to do alone. But
he is here now came in awhile
ago so tomorrow I will not be
alone. One thing nice about
it I had no time to sit and
study about things and get the
blues I have them bad enough
as it is.

I want to be I want to be
out where you are where ever
that is makes no difference
where it might be just so
you were there, half of my
kingdom for one hour with
you tonight I don't know rather
I can stand it to stay away
another week or not sure don't
think I can like a baby needs
its mamma that's how I need
you, I wonder if you are writing
to me or ~~ever~~ thinking of
me I'll bet you are, I sure do
hope you are enjoying the evening
for Sunday only comes once
each week. and about once each

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month for me as I have to work
sure is hard luck to have to work
aren't you glad you don't have
to work but say I have one
happy thought wait until I get
back from France I expect to
bring back a million then
what. Say while we are talking
war or might tell you that the
Camp Fort Riley is quarantined
they have spinal meningitis and
two deaths already last Thurs.

A letter from William Friday
gave us the news, Gladys started
up there yesterday on 22 and
I don't know if she came back
or not she did not know about
it when she left, sure is a
bad thing to have among the boys
I have not got that exemption
yet, I am worried that it may
fail but Boss says he knows it
will come, so you can tell Geo.
but no one else, and tell Arthur
I have not got my notices yet
(For Annie would spread it)

Roy and Orpha are going on a

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I will try and get my letters
out there the same day so it
will be more handy for you
in going to the snail box after
them, If I write Sun. and Wed
you will know when to go
after them won't you?

You are Geo. and Daddie coming
along with their work are they
about to get caught up without
I wish they would tell Boles et
am a Horse Doctor.

Say if I don't suit you
will sure think it is another
four o'clock session class going
to hold but I guess I would
run out before 4 A.M.

Now it is to bed and dream
of a S.D. out in the hills
down on the farm.

Greet me in wonderland
All my love to you dearest
Your own now and
Forever Busy XXXX

Walter