

Postmarked 24 Oct, 1918
 US Military Postal Express, France
 From Lt William P Keesler
 U.S. Army
 Officer's mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Mrs Samuel R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

American Y.M.C.A.
 #3

On Active Service with the
 American Expeditionary Force
 Oct 22, 1918

Dearest Mamma,

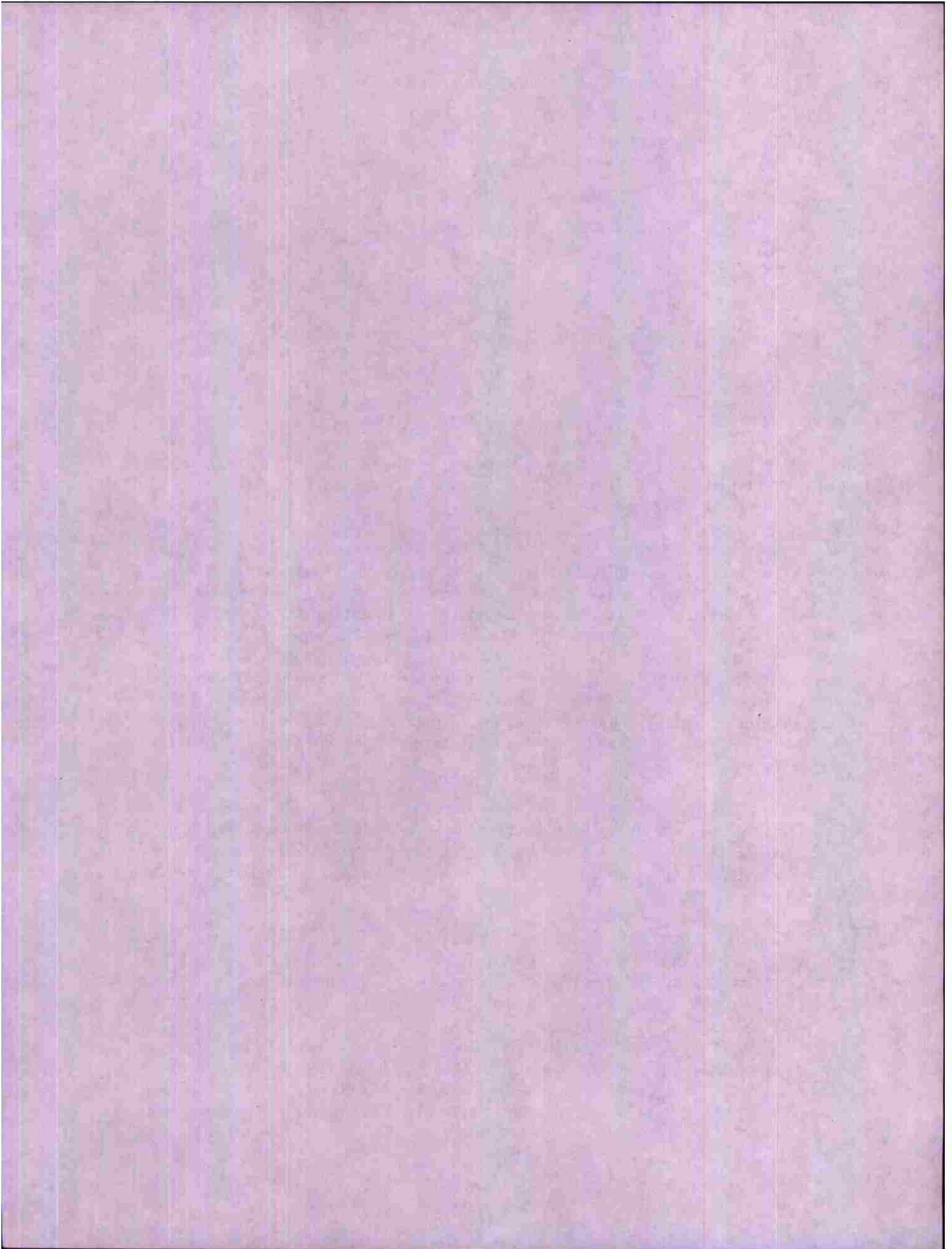
Two letters from you made me very happy yesterday. The first I've had in a great while too. Both we from Montreat. Guess you are at home now. Sure would like to have a nice talk with you like you said in your letters.

Since my last I've moved again. I'm a good deal nearer school now. Only a kilometer away and the village is much drier & cleaner. The move was the best of several I've made. There are no new experiences to come to us in the billeting line now. We have been in building whose rooms were like palaces & also been in barns keeping company to the cows & etc. But right now I've a nice room with a nice stove, a bed which I just fit, having only a couple of inches of clearance between my head and the bed's head. And cover I've got a feather quilt which is about a foot deep. Sure is nice to curl up under too when the mean French rain is falling. The people of the house we shocked to death when they found us sleeping with the windows open. The (sic) kept trying to tell us about how sick we would be. But after finding that that had no avail the (sic) stopped. Now we have them sleeping with theirs open. Good missionaries ain't we.

Sure am sorry to hear about all the Grippe in the Camps. But don't worry about me for the officers who see me every day tell me I'm getting fat. I weight over 160 now. I'm really taking exercises to reduce. Don't do much good how ever. We are well taken care of over here. Uncle Sam which is all of you sure takes care of his soldiers. We work hard and are very willing to fight harder.

Please get and send to me in the Xmas box if you get this in time 1 - "Sim Mannheim Slide Rule" made by Eugene Dietzue Co who have a branch house at 615 Common Street New Orleans. If this doesn't reach you in time don't worry. You see Engineering instruments are hard to get over here. The slide rule will made (sic) a lot of multiplying unnecessary if I get it.

I spent Sunday up at the third Battalion. Had quite an enjoyable evening too. Capt Feeny my old Cap't has been promoted to Major. Cap't Gearheart who father knows is now in the 306 Am Train. We have a new major in our Battalion, our old major went up some where. While I was up there the Y. girls got in some chocolate, you should have seen us buying it. It was sure



good. First I'd had in quite a while. Most of the candy goes to the hospitals for the wounded. They need it.

It had started raining again. I'm sorry for we have to walk over to school to-night for a lecture. But we'll put on our slickers and hobnail shoes & tell the rain to rain and go right ahead. The rain is so funny here. It just drops down with out any noise at all. But it sure is a wet kind. The French people never mind it all. You very seldom see an umbrella only an old cape to keep the rain off.

To-day we use aeroplane to adjust fire. Wish Sam could have been flying over us. Haven't heard in a good while from him. Last I heard was that he was flying for some big guns. Guess he saw some real service in those last drives.

We have been watching the Liberty Loan Drive with a great deal of interest. The Kaider sure has done his best to stop it. But it was like trying to wet a duck. Or trying to stop the wind from blowing. Guess the Kaiser sees ghosts most of the time now. We are hoping to make him see a few starts too.

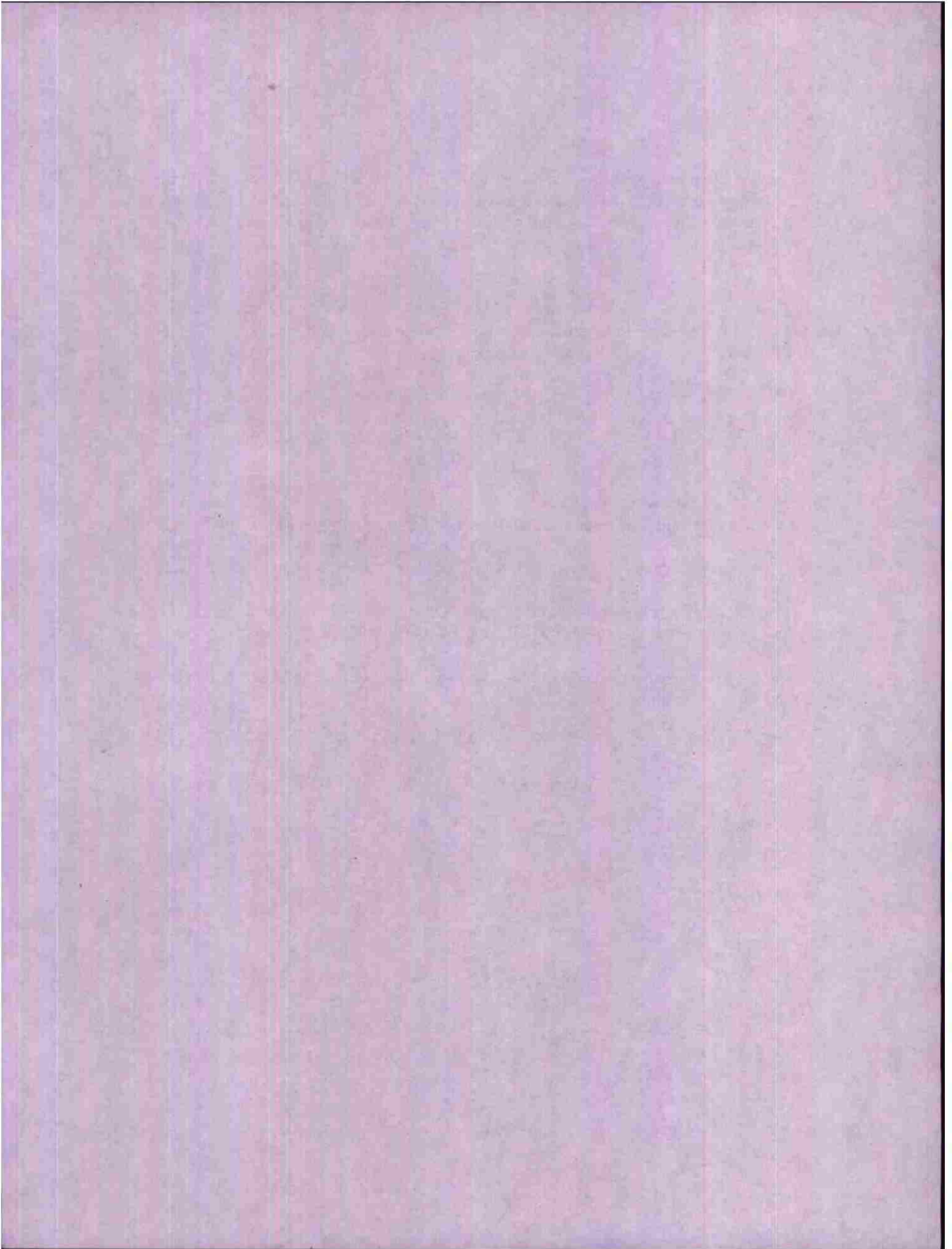
Sunday my two companion Lieuts went down to a town near here. It is in the mountains and the scenery they said was beautiful. I'm planning to go next Sunday if I can. Caesar built the road and walls to it they say. Victor Hugo was born there. Guess I'll see some interesting sights. There is a valley too near here which is very famous for its beauty, may take that in too.

Am sending home our newspaper The Stars & Stripes. You will enjoy reading it as it has the latest dope on the A.E. F. Guess you will get it about 21 days late.

Have you received my Liberty Bonds. I received notice of their shipment. And also the \$50 I send back, am sending another fifty pretty soon.

Must close now. Am well & getting fat. Will cable on the first of each month after this.

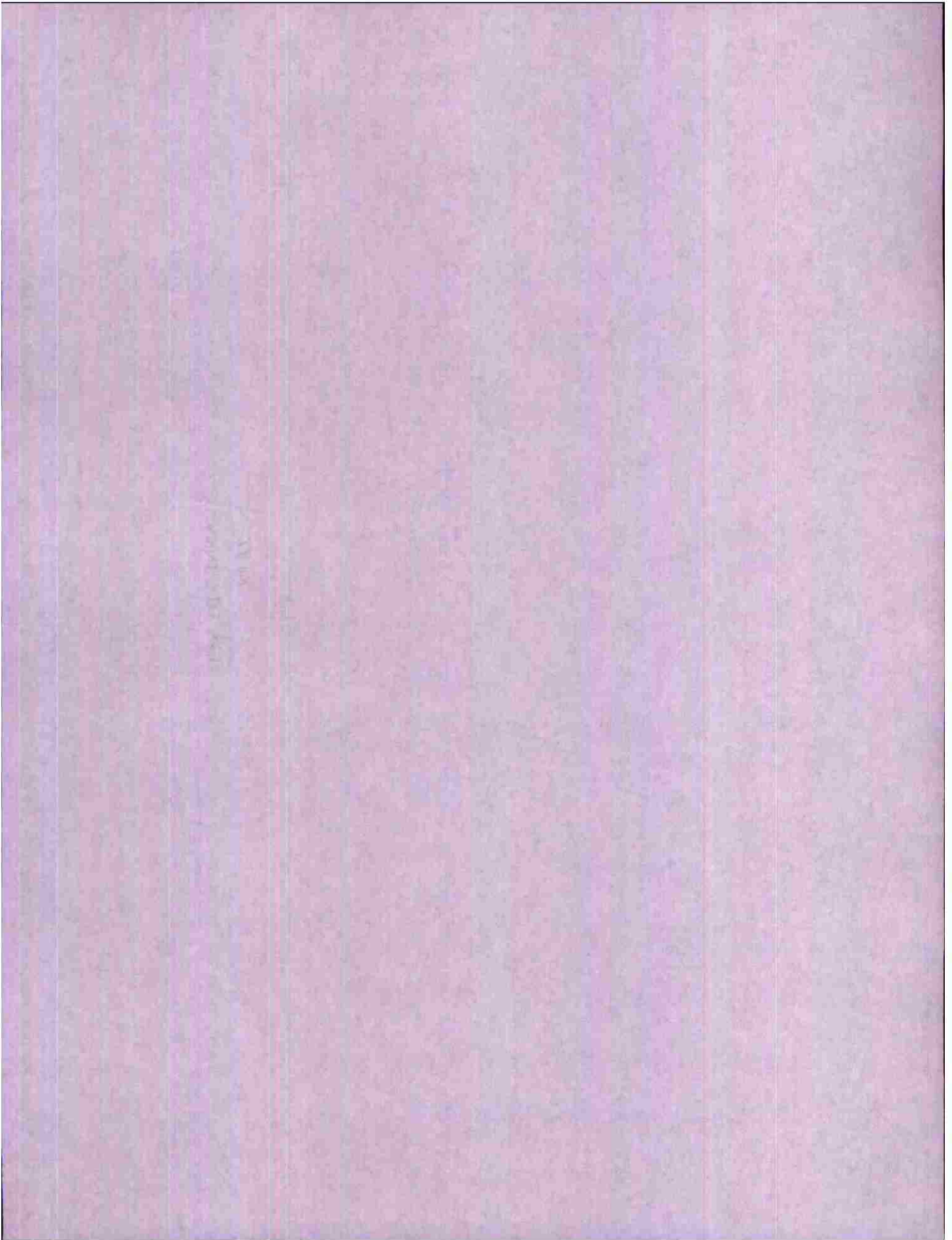
Your loving son,
William



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|---|
| 168-7567-2052 |
| Folder 59 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Historical Research Agency Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433-6124 |

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2007

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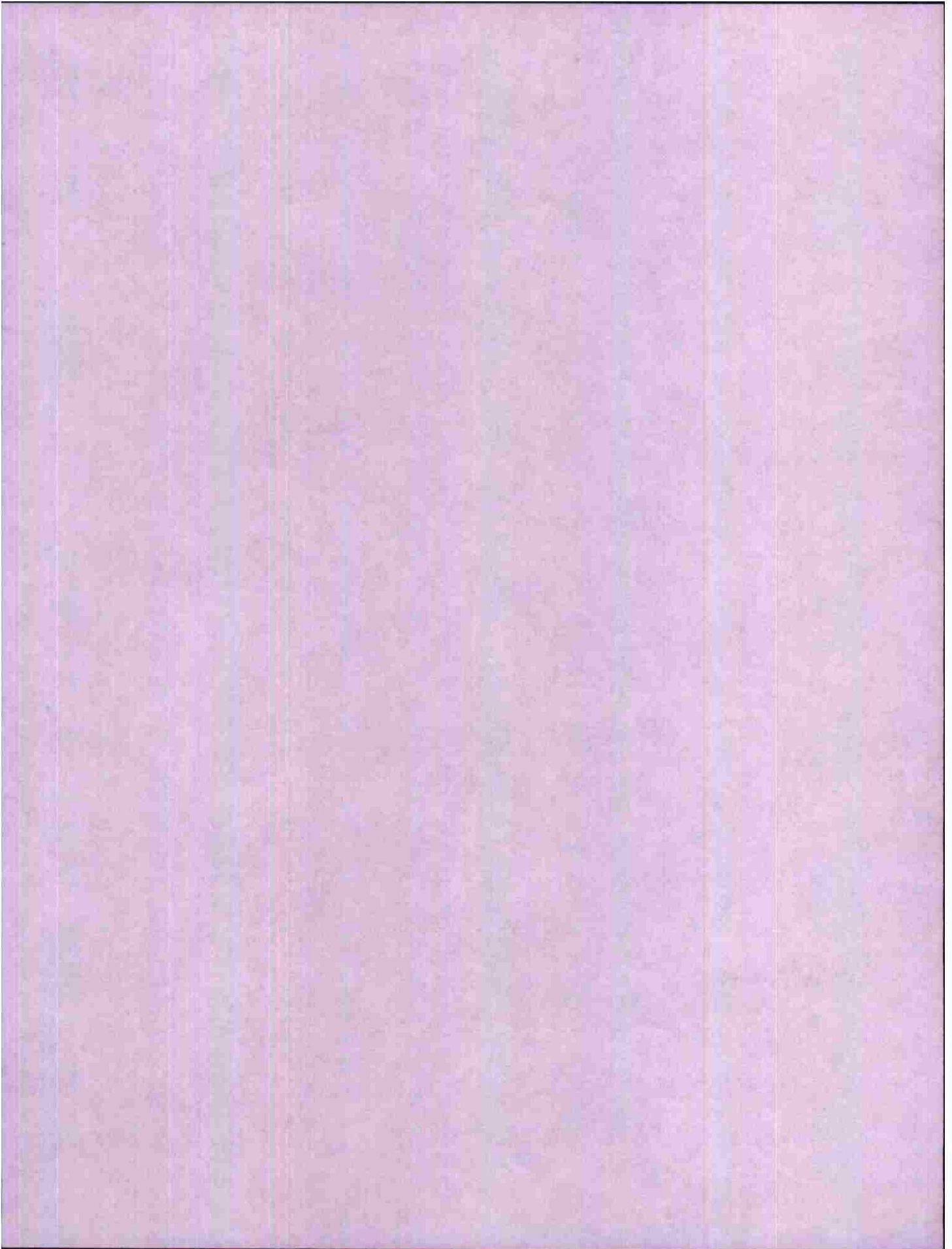


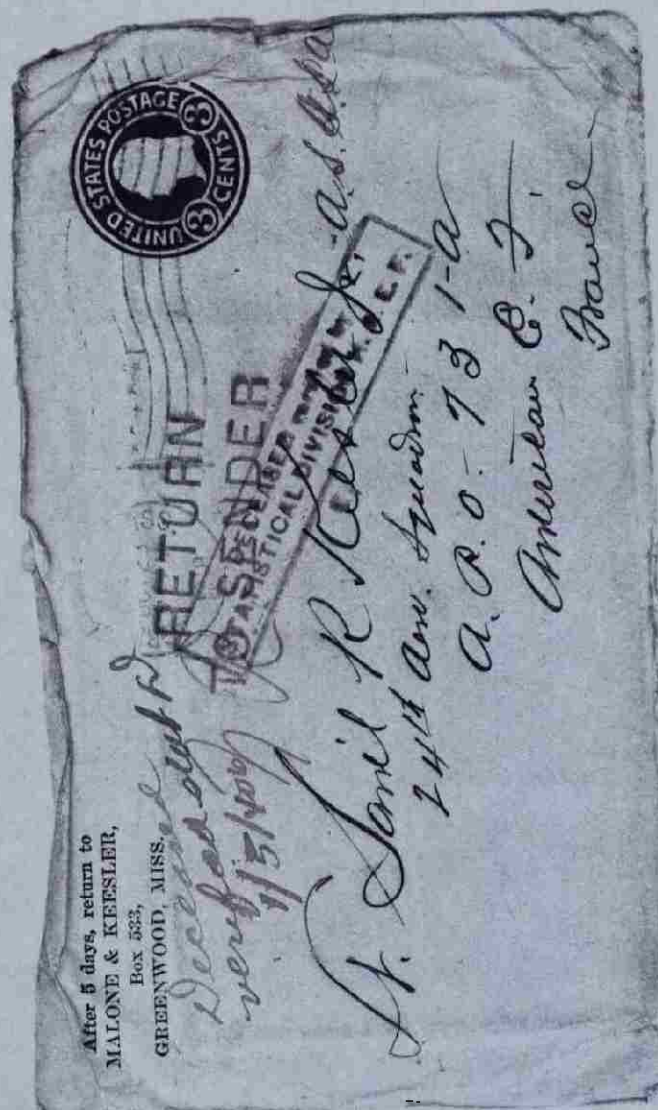
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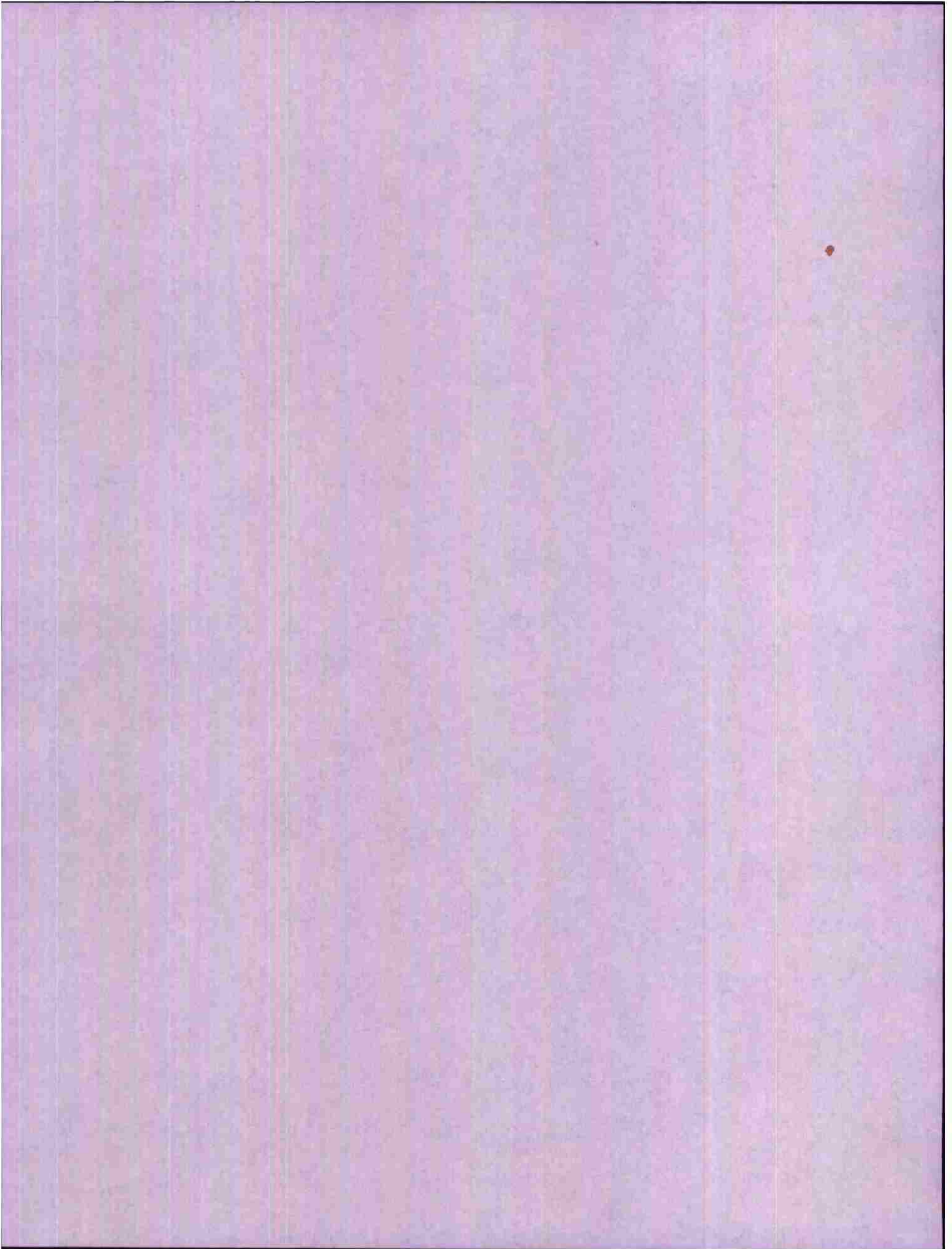
FOLDER 59

RETURN TO
AIR FORCE
Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

01156160







P. A. MALONE

S. R. KEESLER

MALONE & KEESLER

COTTON

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI

Wednesday Oct. 23/18.

My Dear Boy,

Today has been one of those awful
 days, rainy dull days - have nothing much to do,
 the cotton market is very dull - seems like the
 epidemic of 'flu' and the price for the mills are
 holding off buying. - On the whole - we should not
 fret - as we are doing as well as any body in
 the business. A great many of the cotton boys have
 gone to war - lots of them have been to Training Camps
 & are the good ones - Turret, Webb, Harts, Horgan,
 Roydale McNeil - Joe DeLong - Joe Progan are among
 the boys. Com. 2nd Lt. - Ben Aitch is in France with
 the 5th Div. 140th & a. - Lots of sickness and several
 deaths. We at home have been lucky so far - no cases.
 No schools open - Churches - theaters & all public places
 closed. Mr. Hodges died in Cuba - a few days
 ago - 'flu' he was in the medical department of
 the Marines. - Agnes Scott College - is about
 the only College that did not close - they have given
 off light. - Charlotte writes she is doing fine &
 working hard - she is taking an A.B. Course,
 Latin - French - etc - also Voice - she says the music
 teacher says she has the promise of a good voice.

P. A. MALONE

S. R. KEESLER

MALONE & KEESLER

COTTON

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI

She is the only freshman. Those make the Blue Class.
 She is getting to be such a big girl - weight
 about 135. The other children are Lull & Hopper.
 Little Ella J. is growing fast and will soon be out
 of the baby class. - Your Auntie is here - Come on
 back of your Uncle Barry's illness. He is better &
 on the road to recovery. We look all hot letters from
 Grace this week - and have enjoyed them all.
 L.W.R. is well & working as usual. I don't see her
 quite as often as I used to - but wish when I do.
 The same darling. - Your mother is leading Lillian.
 I think she is looking well - has no doubt worry -
 Mary is still with us. "Doyen" is not well - has
 a touch of the "flu" - Little Chas. E. is growing fine.
 We have been blessed son - with all the good news
 and the way our boys have acted under fire.
 Certainly sorry to hear of Bernard being killed - I hope
 he is alive - though a prisoner. - I wish you could
 tell us more about the game - whether or not you
 have the same pilot all the time his name - the
 kind of machine you use - if possible.
 We'll have to close for this time. - We are praying that you
 have got back & come out of this mess with a whole
 skin. - all sent love affectionately to the
 S.R.K.

Postmarked Oct 23, 1918
 Malone & Keesler
 Box 533
 Greenwood, Mississippi

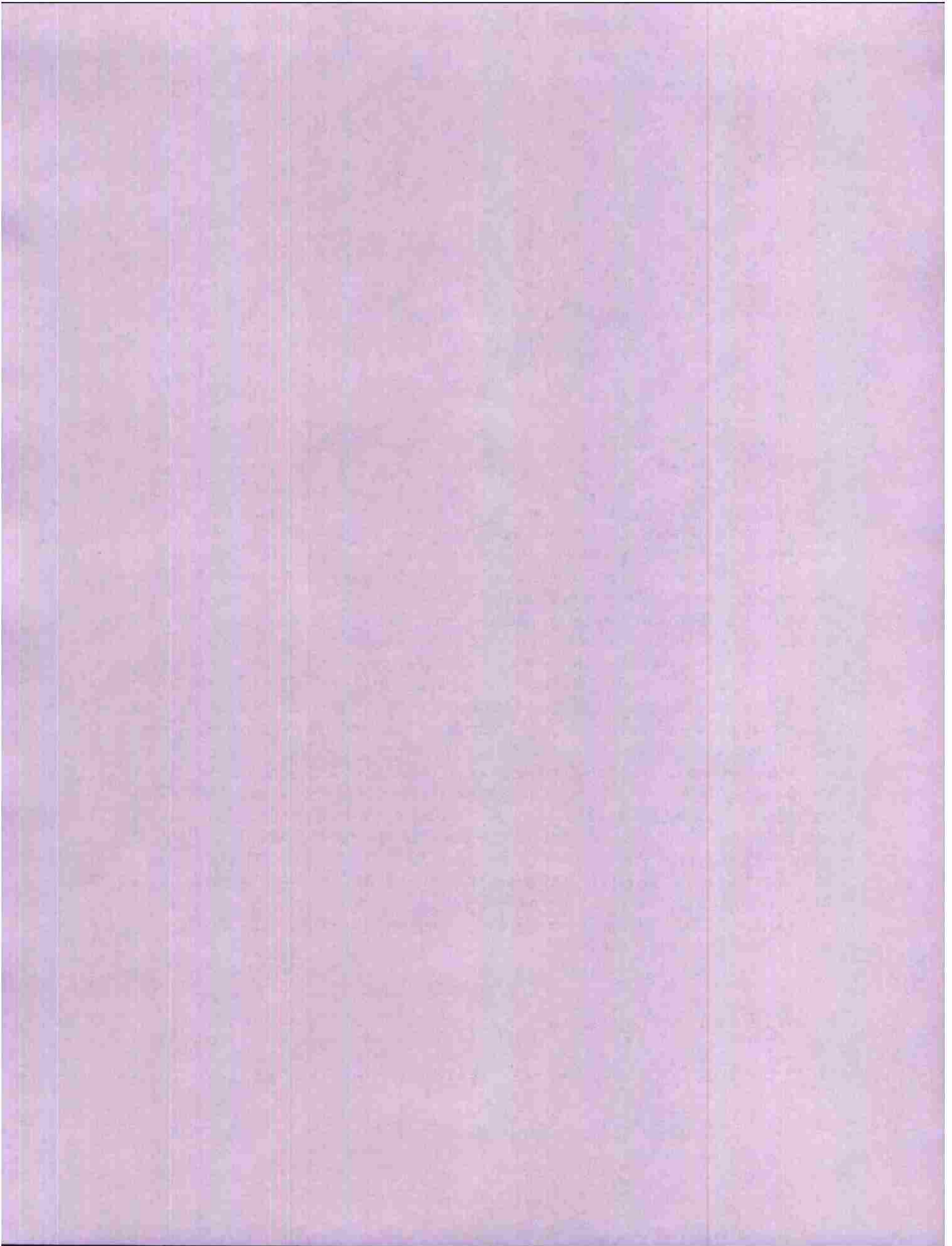
To: Lt Samuel R Keesler Jr, A.S.S.S.
 24th Aer. Squadron
 A.P.O. 73 1-A
 American E. F.
 France
 (Envelope marked "Deceased, Verified Statistical Division")

Wednesday Oct 23/18

My Dear Boy

Today has been one of those awful days, rainy dull days – hence nothing much to do. The cotton market is very dull – seems between the epidemic of "flu" and the peace talk the mills are holding off buying. On the whole, we should not kick – as we are doing as well as any body in the business. A great many of the cotton boys have gone to war – lots of them have been to training camp ... Terrel Wells, Hawk Flanigan, Royale McNeil, Jos Dulaney, Jr. Brogan are among the boys com. 2nd Lt. Ben Pierce is in France with the 39th Div. 140th F.A. Lots of sickness and several deaths. We at home have been lucky so far, no cases. No schools open – churches – theaters & all public places closed. Jr Hodggers died in Cuba – a few days ago – "flu" he was in the medical department of the Marines. Agnes Scott College is about the only college that did not close. They have gotten off light. Charlotte writes she is doing fine & working hard. She is taking an O.B. Course, Latin, French, etc, also voice. She says the music teacher says she has the promise of a good voice. She is the only freshman that made the glee club. She is getting to be such a big girl, weighs about 135. The other children are well & happy. Little Ella T is growing fast and will soon be out of the baby class. Your Auntie is here, come on account of your Uncle Barry's illness. He is better & on the road to recovery. We have all had letters from France this week, and have enjoyed them all. L.W.K. is well & working as usual. I don't see her quite as often as I used to, but most every day. The same darling, your mother is holding her own, I think she is looking well, has no known worry. Mary is still with us. "Doyer" is not well, has a touch of the "flu" little Chas E. is growing fast. We have been thrilled Son, with all the good news and the way our boys have acted under fire. Certainly sorry to hear of Durand being lost. I hope he is alive, though a prisoner, I wish you could tell us more about the game – whether or not you have the same pilots all the time, his name, the kind of machine you use if permissible. Will have to close for this time. We are praying that you have good luck & come out of this mess with a whole skin. All send love,

Affectionately, Father
 S.R.K.



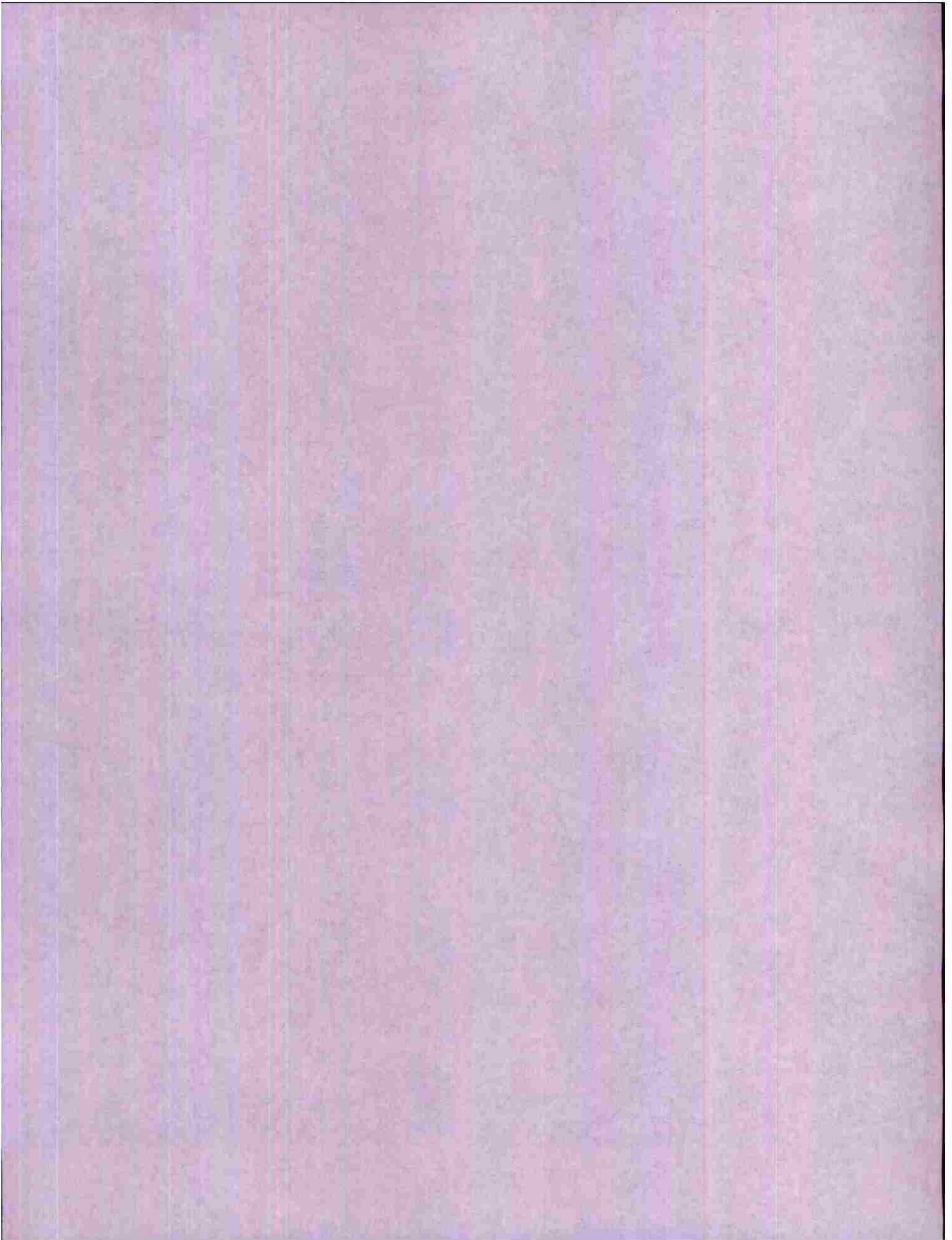
To: Gen. Sam R. Keesler
From: William Keesler (Ship ref to Sam)
Oct 28, 1918

Nov 7 1918 - Box 2
Folger 48
RETURN TO
AIR FORCE
Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

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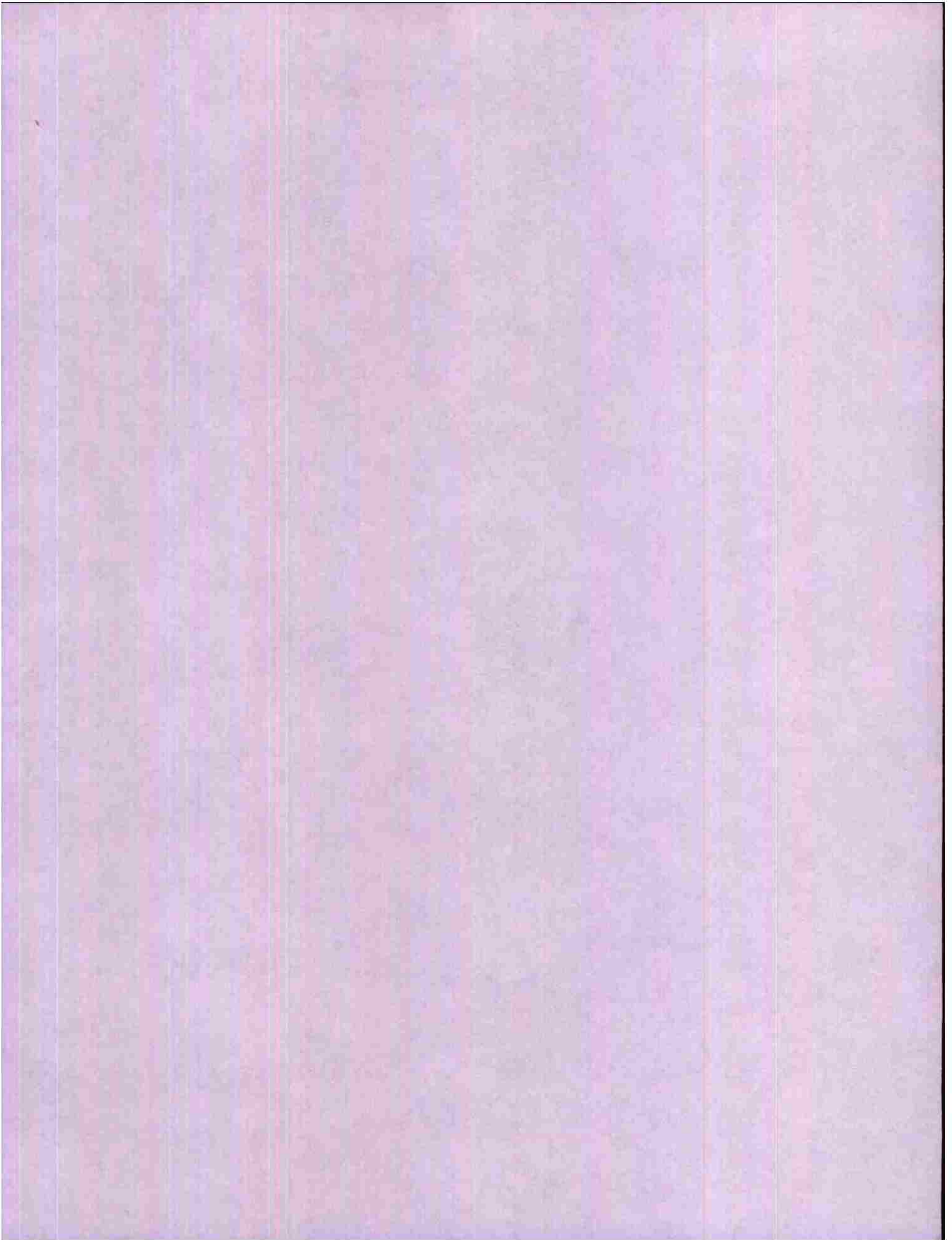


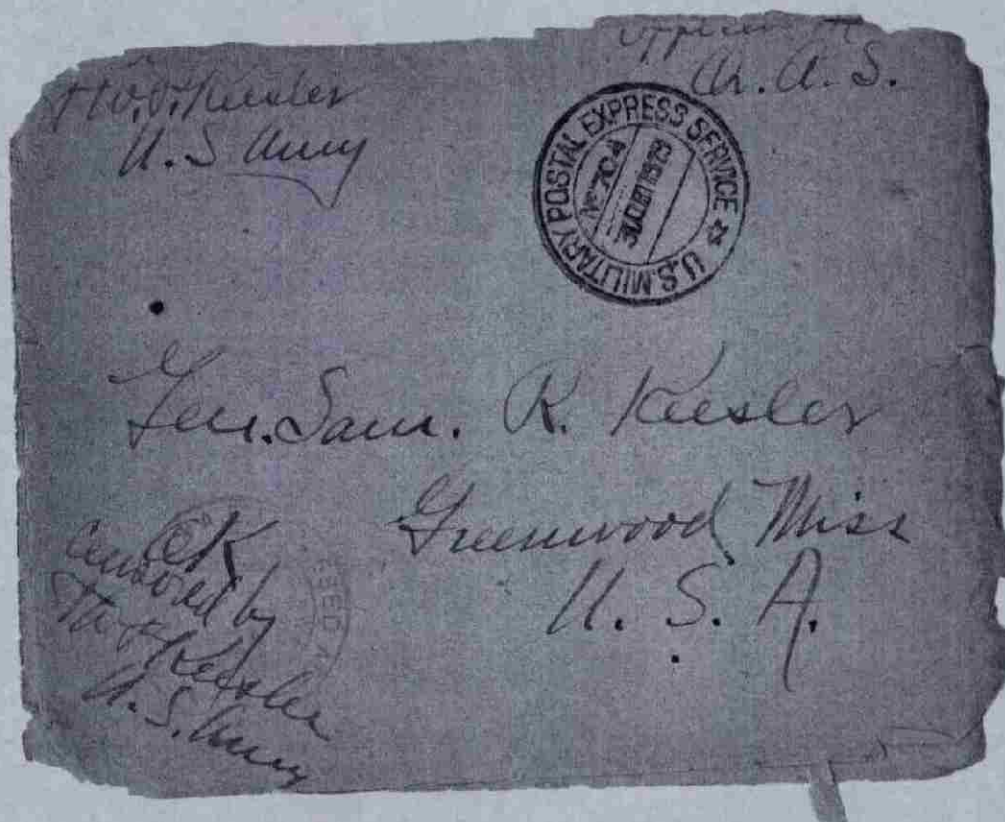
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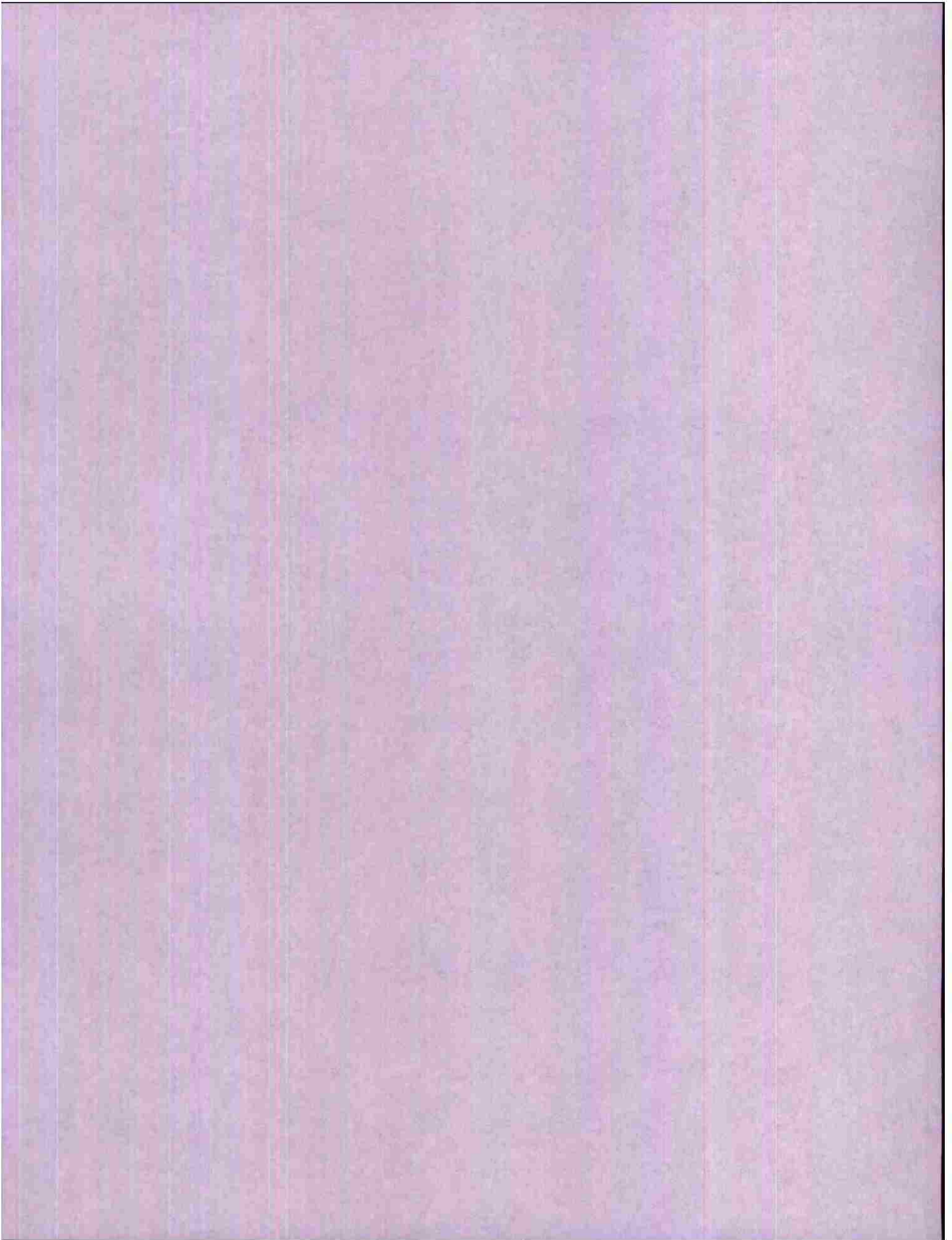
FOLDER 60

RETURN TO
AIR FORCE
Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

O 1156160







Coltano home but decided to wait and see if the go or leave thru OK. I haven't much need of money over here. Nothing to spend it on under except a canoe. No chance that.

Saw H. Henderson last night. He says remember him the big tackle at H.C. He told me that "Black" (today) is a second best man. Look for "Black" to win that he was winning. Of the training at some school. He has been up at the front. Haven't heard from him direct. Whether here & heard from J.A. Keeler. J.A. has spoken in the regiment here.

We are now working hard now. Work all day long & a lecture at night. But we don't mind it at all as the officers are better than the women we wish we of



ON ACTIVE SERVICE
WITH THE
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
1918

Oct 7 1918

like home for sure.

This morning I took my detail on a relay, reaching that we went out with the boys and three I tried to see if I could lose the men. Nearly got lost my self, nearly would have been caught I had. The men did well. We also enjoyed the boys very much the distance. We have beautiful the brown yellow and red makes the much green of the pine trees of my pretty.

I started the Stars and Stripes to you this week. Hope you will enjoy it. We will do. Most thing thing that is suitable is enjoyed the. I started to send at \$100.00

It will be almost 70 years since when this gets home.
 Be sure to remember the idid save me a piece
 of Turkey and cranberry sauce. There is nothing
 so good as that.

Good bye for this time, Lot of love to you all
 Am well.

Your devoted son

William

Spent
 accordingly
 3/6 to 7/11

✓

better one at Camp seed
 it heats training Camp
 all to pieces. This is what
 we had for Sunday
 dinner. It's good but not
 a little extra but not
 much. Satisfy (good vegetable)
 the a piece steak with much
 more all over it, smothered
 potatoes & green beans, coffee
 bread and jam. Want that
 good. The much more from
 would do well had no
 pecker the much more.
 After dinner Chaplain Burns
 had a short Service, very
 good & very appropriate &
 too. We are enjoying it.
 Chaplain is a wonder,
 everyone is his friend,
 no one the good. Good but
 just be good man, good
 all around. There is only
 a few who can like him
 at the store. He made good



4 ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 WITH THE
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Oct 28 1918

Dear Father

I am very disappointed letter
 came yesterday, the only thing not
 acceptable was the large. I just
 eat up all letters from home
 than I bought them up and
 send them to Sam. By the way,
 I haven't heard from him in
 a good bit yet. I've would
 like to hear where he is.
 This last week we have
 done lots of work all the time
 weather has been bad being
 cold & rainy. But when a
 day comes along like to
 stay the first who to forget
 the ugliness of the rain must
 us the beauty of the sunshine.
 There we are pleased with a
 good news. Never had a

Black holler the other night. The other day we started foot-ball. The game playing in overalls but it proved almost as fatal as a machine gun barrage. The men all acted so much like the other fellow was Bill Kaiser. Did break any bones but there was plenty of bruised and bleeding men. Before the game was over. We decided we would wait until later for our casualties. Volley ball is the game and as many as possible can play it. Plenty of actors too. Yesterday Dr Bais, Kintch cliff & I went out pistol shooting. The Dr was very good, being on old hand. At the game didn't make

a miss out of 25 shots & being young didn't make but this out of 25. But the men do better. We were shooting an auto-mate. I like the revolver much better. Both ~~the~~ are wonder for accuracy however.

You asked about my traps. Didn't have but 10 F.W.D's, two dodges & 1 Ford, in the company. You see every ~~kind~~ touch make. I ~~hard~~ touched a car since then. Seemed like all my motor experience is going to waste. Hope not. Saw some tractors the other day they were beauties. Saw also a big white car, there are used for the colonels & etc. I just attached to get at the wheel. Would have felt

Postmarked 30 Oct, 1918
 US Military Postal Express Service
 From Lt WP Keesler
 U.S. Army
 Officer's Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Gen. Sam R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

American Y.M.C.A
 #4

On Active Service with the
 American Expeditionary Force
 Oct 28, 1918

Dear Father,

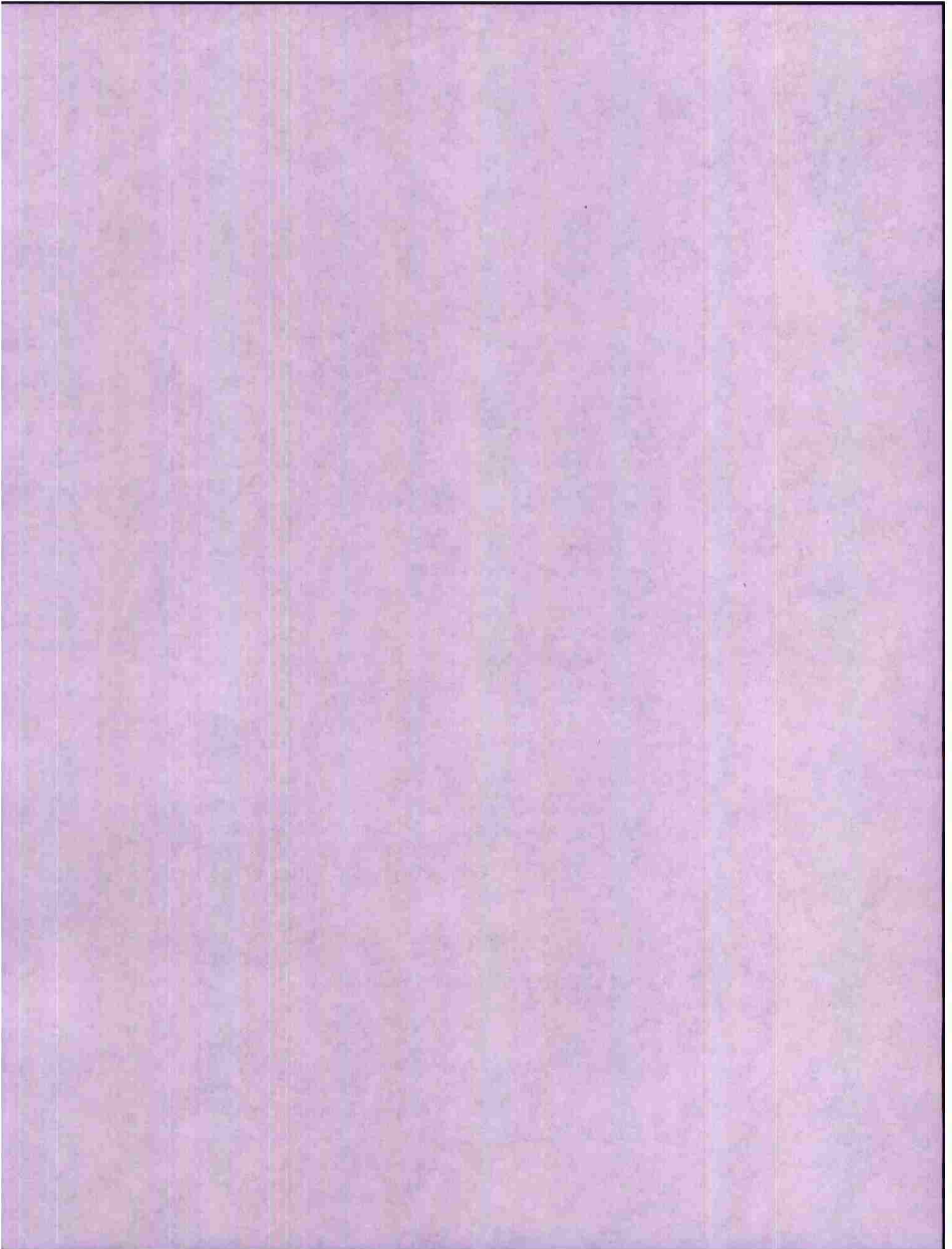
Your very enjoyable letter came yesterday, the only thing not enjoyable was the size. I just eat up all letters from home then I bungle them up and send them to Sam. By the way I haven't heard from him in a good bit yet. Sure would like to know where he is.

This last week we have done lots of work although the weather has been bad being cold & rainy. But when a day comes along like today one just has to forget the ugliness of the rain & mist in the beauty of the sunshine. Then we are blessed with a good mess. Never had a better one at Camp and it beats Training Camp all to pieces. This is what we had for Sunday dinner. I'll grant it was a little extra but not much. **Sam**, (good vegetable) the a fine steak with mushrooms all over it, smashed potatoes & green beans, coffee bread and jam. Wasn't that good. The mushrooms grown wild as do snails but we prefer the mushrooms. After dinner Chaplain Currie had a short Service, very good & very appropriate too. We all enjoyed it. Chaplain is a wonder, everyone is his friend, none of the goody good but just a good man, good all round. There is only a few who can lick him at the gloves. He made Jack Black holler the other night.

The other day we started foot-ball. The men playing in overalls but it proved almost as fatal as a machine gun barrage. The men all acted to much like the other fellow was Bill Kaiser. Didn't break any bones but there was plenty of bruised and bleeding men before the game was over. We decided we would wait until later for our casualties. Volleyball is the game and as many as possible can play it. Plenty of a chore too.

Yesterday Dr Bass, Hintch Cliff & I went out pistol shooting. The Dr was very good, being an old hand at the game didn't make a miss out of 25 shots. I being young didn't make five out of 25. But I'll sure do better. We were shooting an auto-matic. I like the revolver much better. Both are wonders for accuracy however.

You asked about my trips. Didn't have but 10 F.W.D.s, two Dodges & 1 Ford in the convoy. You see every known make. I haven't touched a car since then. Seemed like all my motor experience is going to waste. Hope not. Sam some tractors the other day they were beauties. Saw also a big white car, there are used for the colonels & etc. I just itched to get at the wheel. Would have felt like home for sure.



This morning I took my detail on a map reading test. We went out into the woods and then I tried to see if I could loose the men. Nearly got lost myself, surely would have been bad if I had. The men did well. We also enjoyed the trip very much the autumn woods are beautiful. The brown yellow and red make the rich green of the firs show up very pretty.

I started the Starts and Stripes to you this week. Hope you will enjoy it. We sure do. Most every thing that is readable is enjoyed tho.

I started to send a \$100⁰⁰ dollars home but decided to wait and see if the \$50⁰⁰ came thru OK. I haven't much need of money over here. Nothing to spend it on unless on gets a leave. No chance of that.

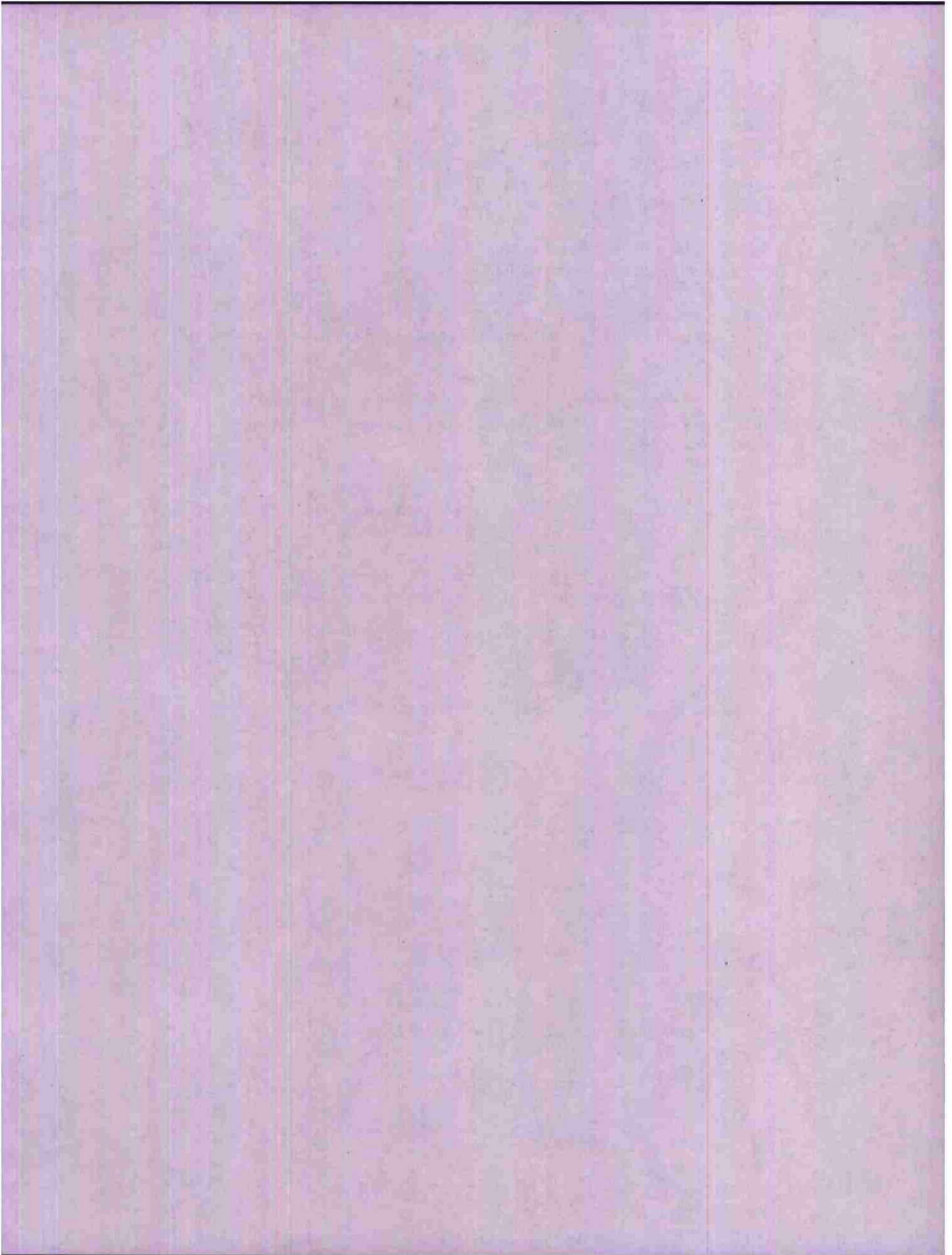
Saw L.H. Anderson last night. Do you remember him the big tackle at D.C. He told me that "Dub" Roddy is a second Lieut now. Good for "Dub" said also that he was in charge of the training at some School. Joe has been up at the front. Haven't heard from him direct. Neither have I heard from Ed Keesler. Ed best friend is in the regiment here.

We are sure working hard now. Work all day dong & a lecture at night. But we don't mind it at all as the sooner we know how the sooner we will be in it.

It will be almost Thanksgiving when this gets home. Be sure to remember me and save me a piece of Turkey and cranberry sauce. There is nothing so good as that.

Good buy for this time. Lots of love to you all. Am well.

Your devoted son,
William



To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
From: William Keesler
Nov 1, 1918

Ms. 7567-002

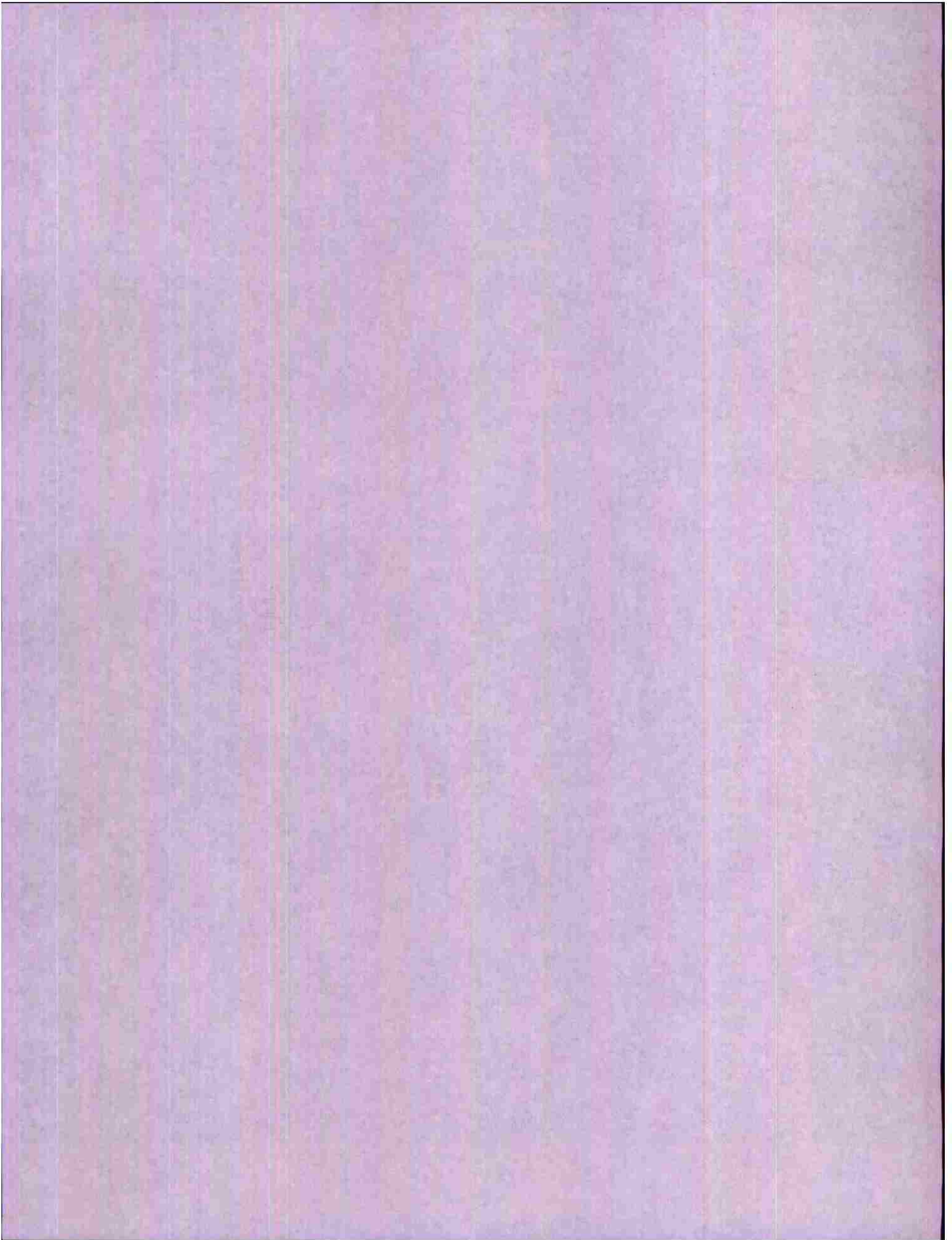
Fol. 61

RETURN TO
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Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

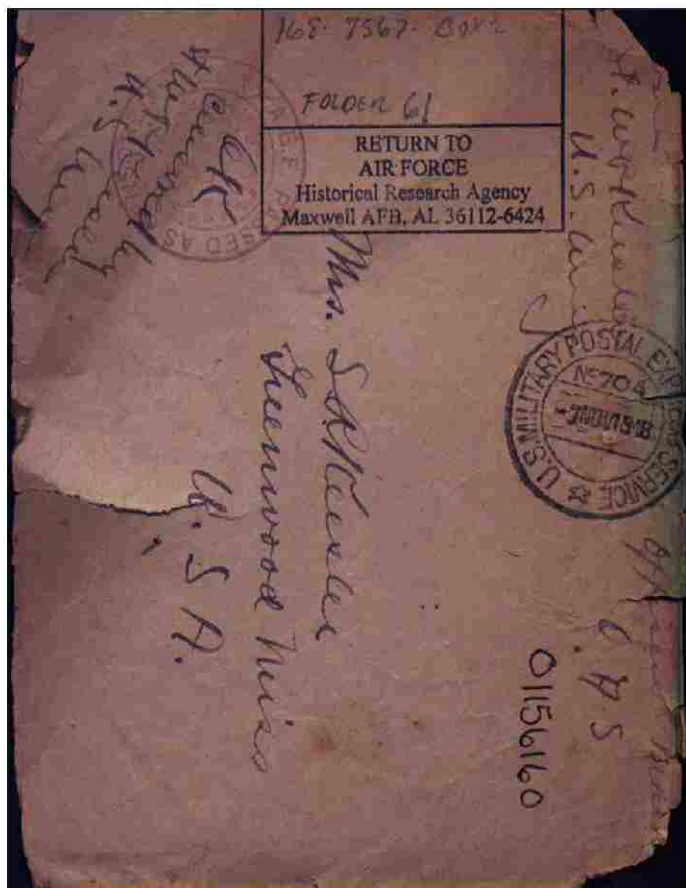
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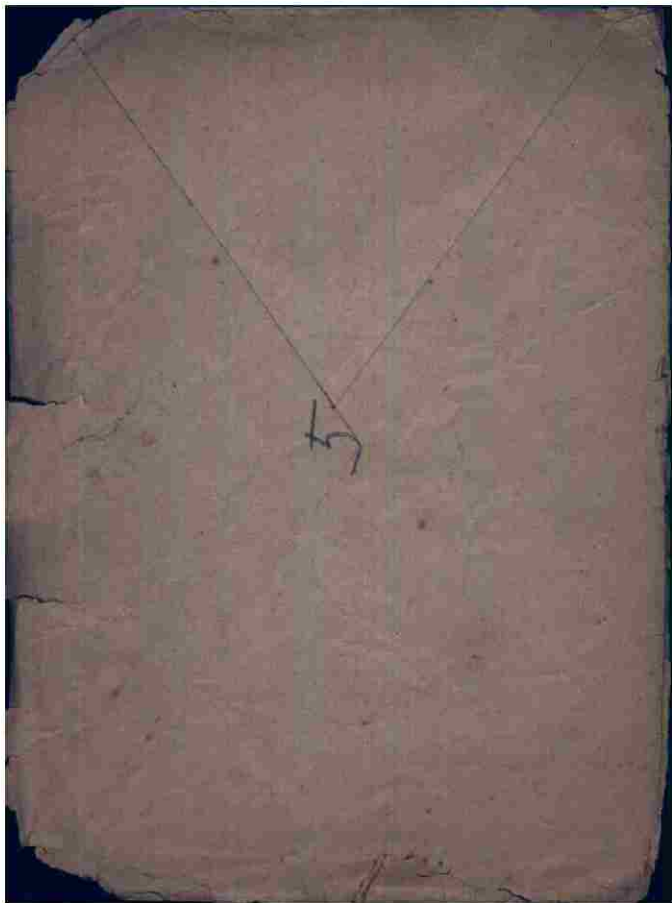


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France
 Nov. 1, 1918
 Dearest Mamma,
 Just a line to say
 that I'm well and O.K. That
 is the standard way of almost
 any letter that an enlisted man
 writes. They write a lot and
 love to receive a lot of mail.
 I'm sitting in the orderly
 room, having just taken
 a respite & beyond the mail.
 It is a wonderful morning.
 Not too cold and clear. Just
 the kind one likes when
 his work is in the open.

We are always thankful for
 these. We have lots of things
 to be thankful for.
 Just tonight the band was
 once to give us a concert. The
 first we have had since we
 have been in town. The music
 was great. The French came
 out, like to a circus and every
 body had a big time. When
 Dixie was played you could
 have heard the yell over at
 school & Kilometers away. And
 when "The Long Haul" was played
 then you heard everything but

the band. We were all thinking of the folks at home and others. I left shortly afterwards but from my room I could still hear them playing.

Yesterday all the officers were invited to go up in the balloon. I wanted to but could not get over. The experience must be great. I'd like to try the plane too but they are not taking me up in it.

Lots of love to all at home.
Will write longer next time.

Your loving son
William

OK
Starkweather
31647A

Postmarked 1 Nov, 1918
US Military Postal Express Service
From Lt WP Keesler
U.S. Army
Officer's Mail
O.A.S.
To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
Greenwood, Miss
U.S.A.

France
Nov 1, 1918

Dearest Mamma,

Just a line to say that I'm well and O.K. That is the standard way of almost any letter that an enlisted man writes. They write a lot and love to receive a lot of mail.

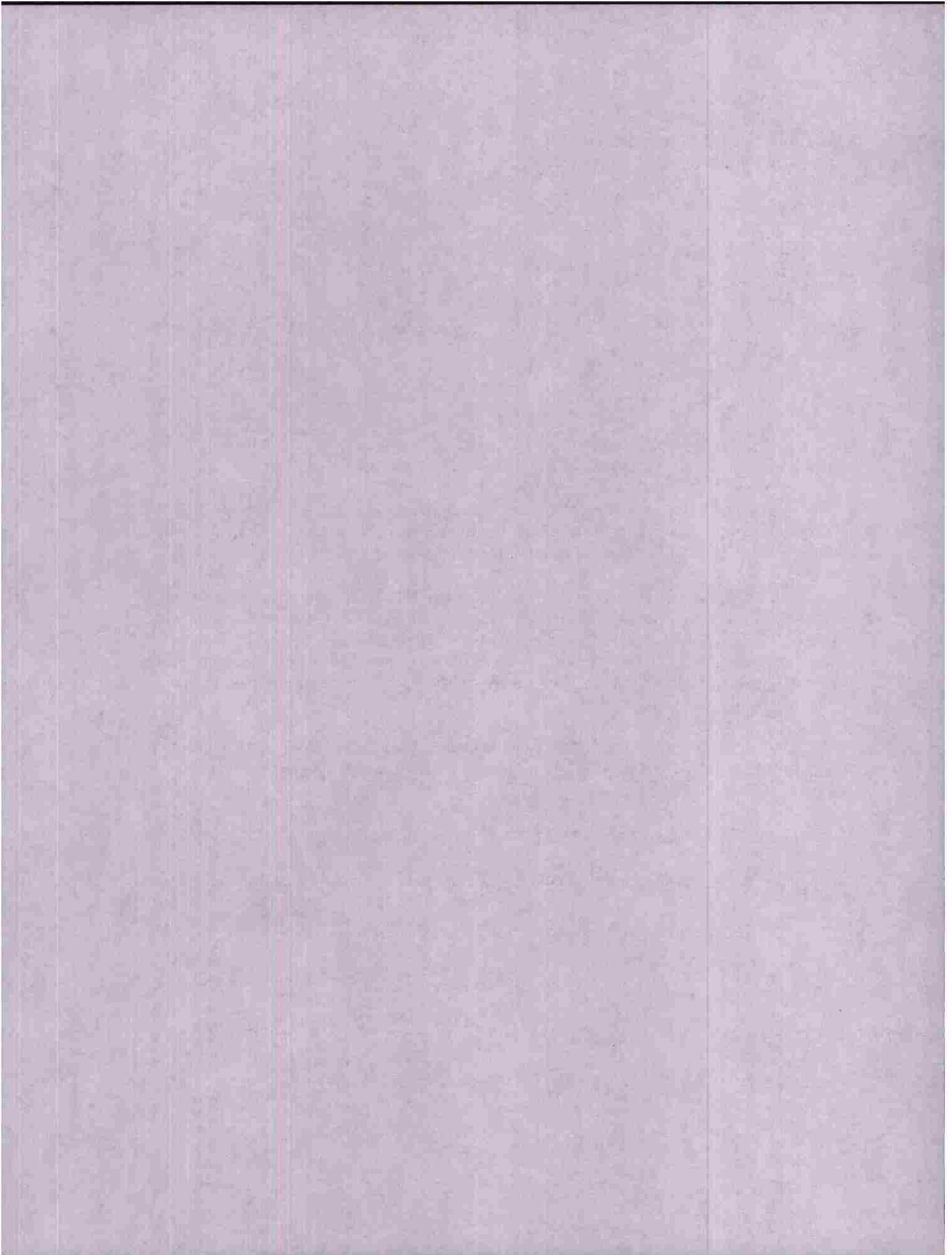
I'm sitting in the orderly room, having just taken reveille & censored the mail. It is a wonderful morning. Not too cold and clear. Just the kind one like when his work is in the open. We are always thankful for them. We have lots of things tho to be thankful for.

Last night the band was over to give us a concert. The first we have had since we have been in town. The music was great. The French came out, like to a circus and every body had a big time. When Dixie was played you could have heard the yell over at school 2 kilometers away. And when the "The Long Trail" was played then you heard nothing but the band. We were all thinking of the folks at home and others. I left shortly afterwards but from my room I could still hear them playing.

Yesterday all the officers were invited to go up in the balloon. I wanted to but could not get over. The experience must be great. I'd like to try the plane too but they are not taking men up in it.

Lots of love to all at home. Will write longer next time.

Your loving son,
William

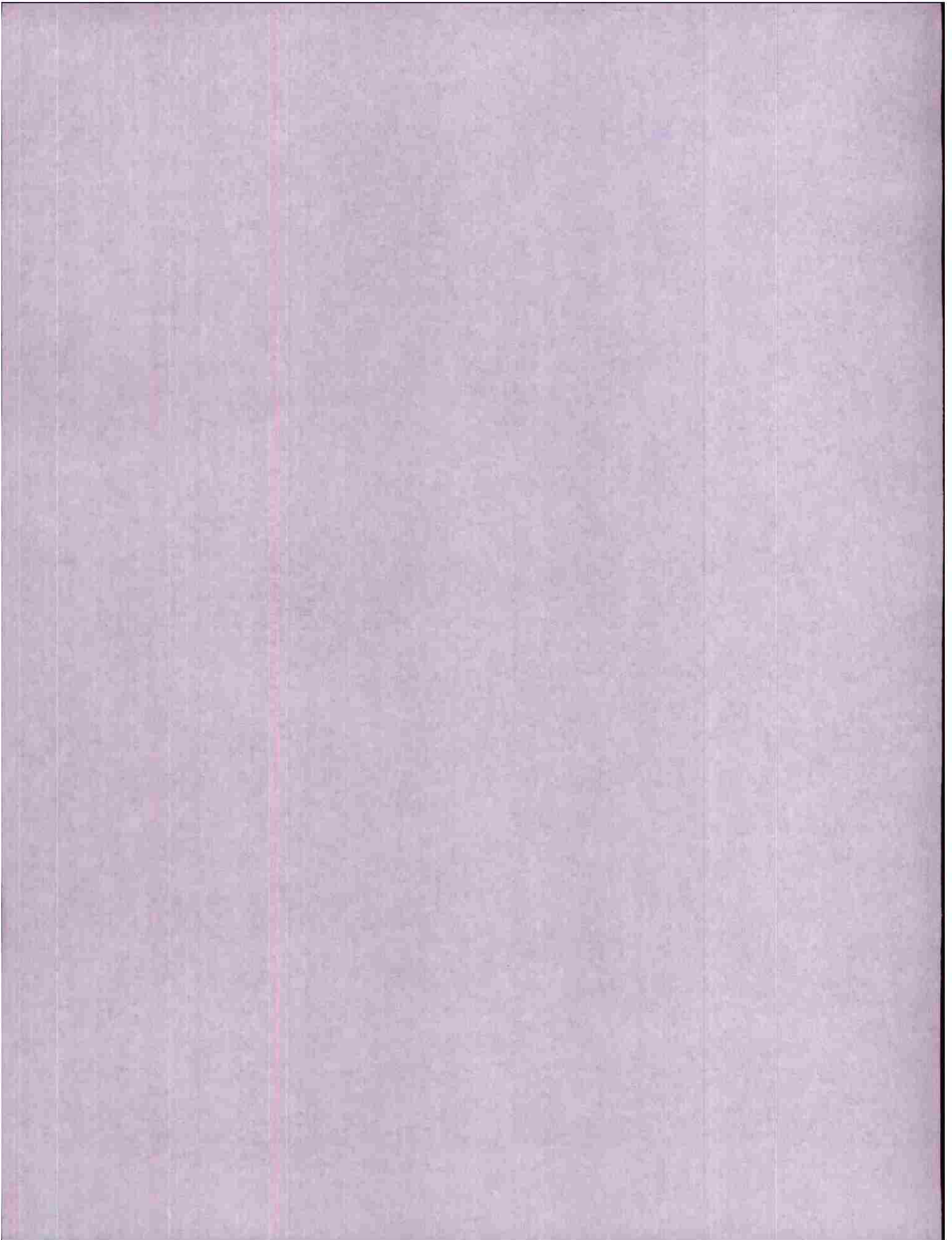


To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
From: William Keesler
Nov 2, 1918

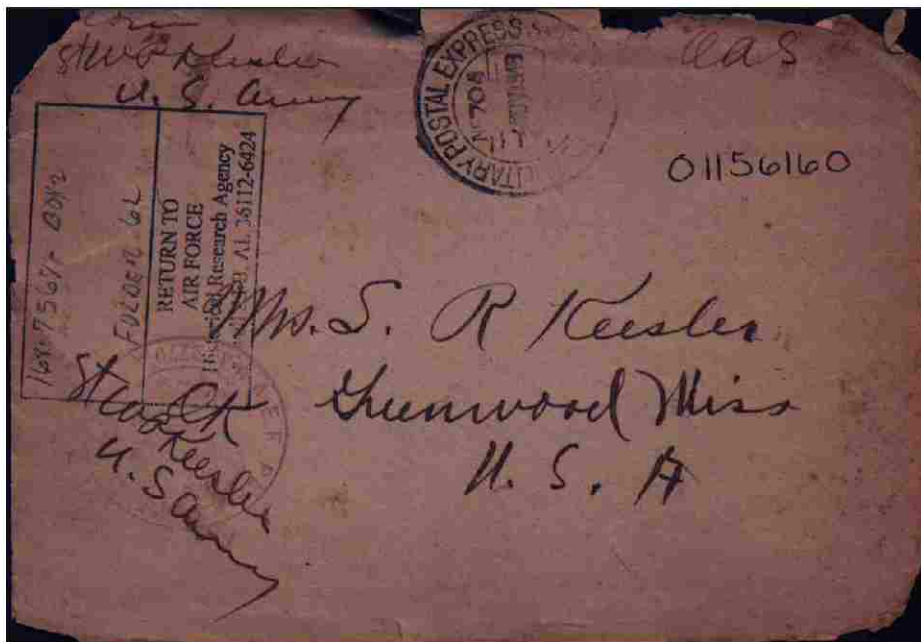
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| 165 7567- Box 2 |
| FOLEGA 62 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Historical Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6124 |

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2007

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to you.

Just finished the cleaning of the detachments. The men were so tired to work and the little we had interesting but we got them one can read a long and boring book which is why it had not to say so. There are one wonderful lot, the American soldiers away from home. They are much friends everywhere with almost everybody. You should see a big battle fought with himself all. Heated up in a French chair trying to talk French by putting French words on on English words. Just not

Dear Maurice

Trace
Nov 21 1918

Good morning here you are to be met. It is six o'clock here and in five or six hours ahead of you.

This morning is one of those which give me the idea that everything is at place and in love with each other. It is the kind too that make me lonely when I think of and want to see, and love more than ever loved one at home. It is in a dark cloud like rain which we will have to clear up before we come back

I'm often with his whole body.
But I can't laugh for in just
the same way. The 7 inch I
know compares mostly with the
words for things to eat and Combs
the little "Combs" in on all the
time. Combs "nearly every morning
too.
Must also now. Best for
are with
your Combs
of William
J. H. H. H.
3/6/74
G. H. H.

Postmarked 4 Nov, 1918
US Military Postal Express Service
From Lt WP Keesler
U.S. Army
Officer's Mail
O.A.S.
To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
Greenwood, Miss
U.S.A.

France
Nov 2, 1918

Dear Mamma,

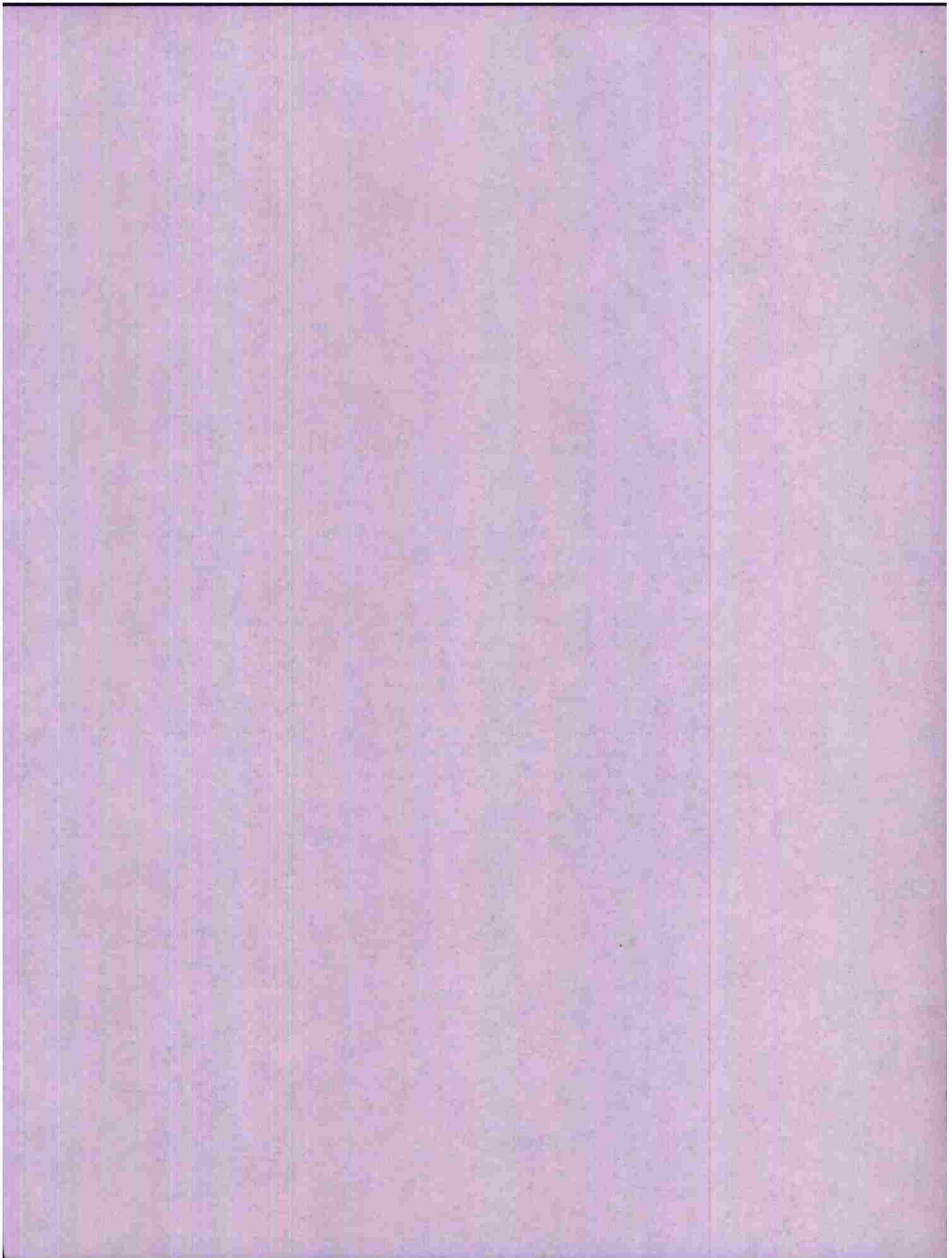
Good morning have you gone to been (sic) yet. It is six o'clock here and I'm five or six hours ahead of you.

This morning is one of those which give one the idea that everybody is at peace and in love with each other. It is the kind too that make we lonely soldiers think of and want to see, and love more than ever our loved ones at home. Yet there is a dark cloud like rain which we will have to clear up before we come back to you.

I've just finished the censoring of the detachments mail. The men sure do like to write and the letter are real interesting but in lots of them one can read a longing and loving heart which is doing its best not to say so. They are a wonderful lot, the American soldier away from home. They can make friends anywhere and with almost any body. You should see a big Buck Private with himself all curled up in a French chaise trying to talk French by putting French endings on English words and great lot of motions with his whole body. But I can't laugh for I'm just the same way. The French I know composes mostly of the words for things to eat and "Combien" The battle of "Combien" is on all the time. "Combien" nearly always winning too.

Must close now. Best of love. Am well.

Your loving son
William



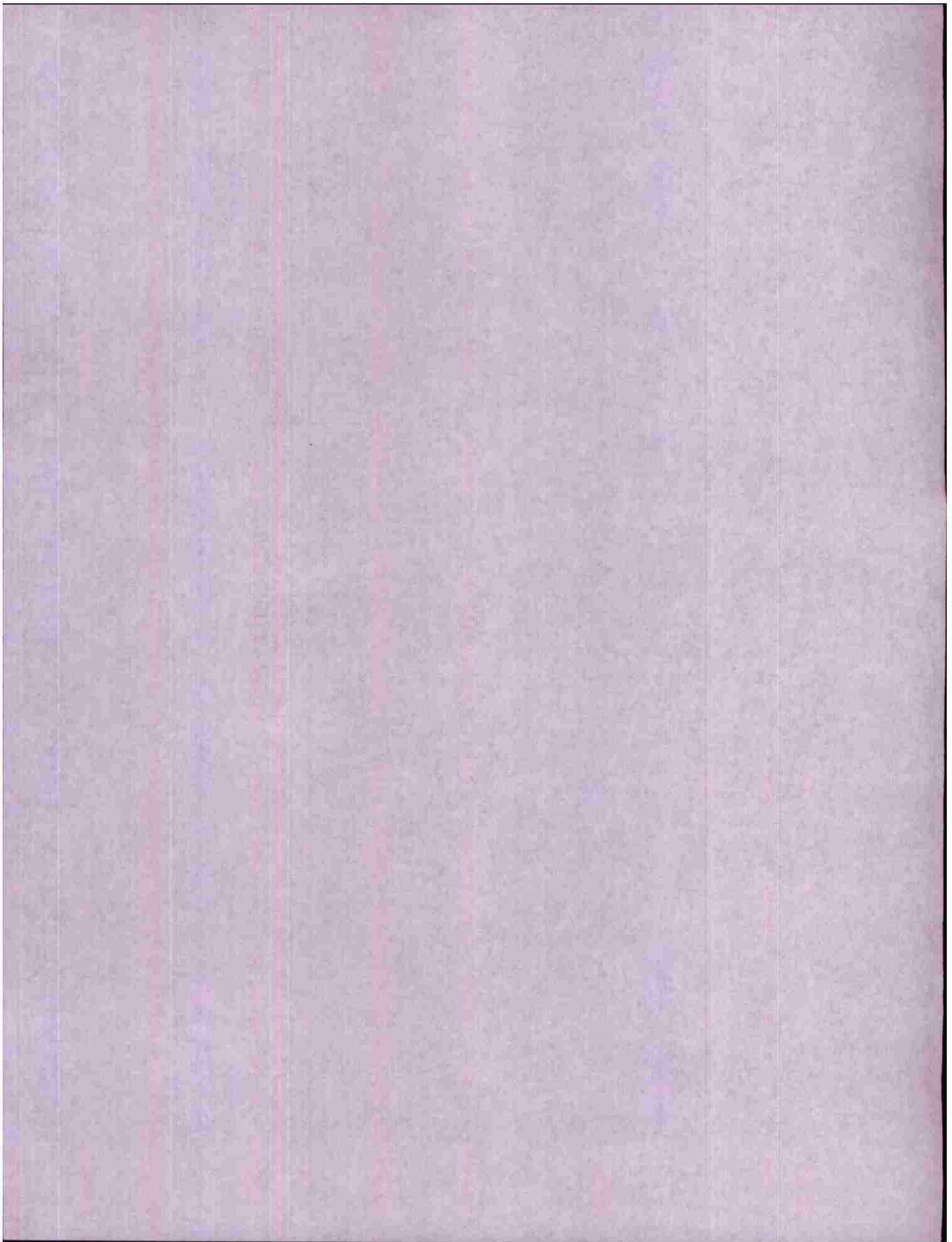
To: Mrs. S.R. Kesler
From: William Kesler
Nov 11, 1918

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|--|
| 100-7569-8012 |
| Folder 63 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Historical Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-1124 |

SCANNED BY ACD

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| |
|--|
| 168-7567-8X2 |
| FAOEN 63 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Historical Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424 |

Nov 11 1918.

My dearest Mother & family,
 We are as happy as I
 can. We were sorry for you
 mother and the rest. Happy,
 in so happy that I want
 think much love with. I want
 in out love here. With
 that at present.

With all love from son

Sincerely

William

Wm. W. W. W.
 U.S.A.

01456160

Postmarked 12 Nov, 1918
US Army Post Office
From Lt WP Keesler
U.S. Army
Officer's Mail
O.A.S.
To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
Greenwood, Miss
U.S.A.

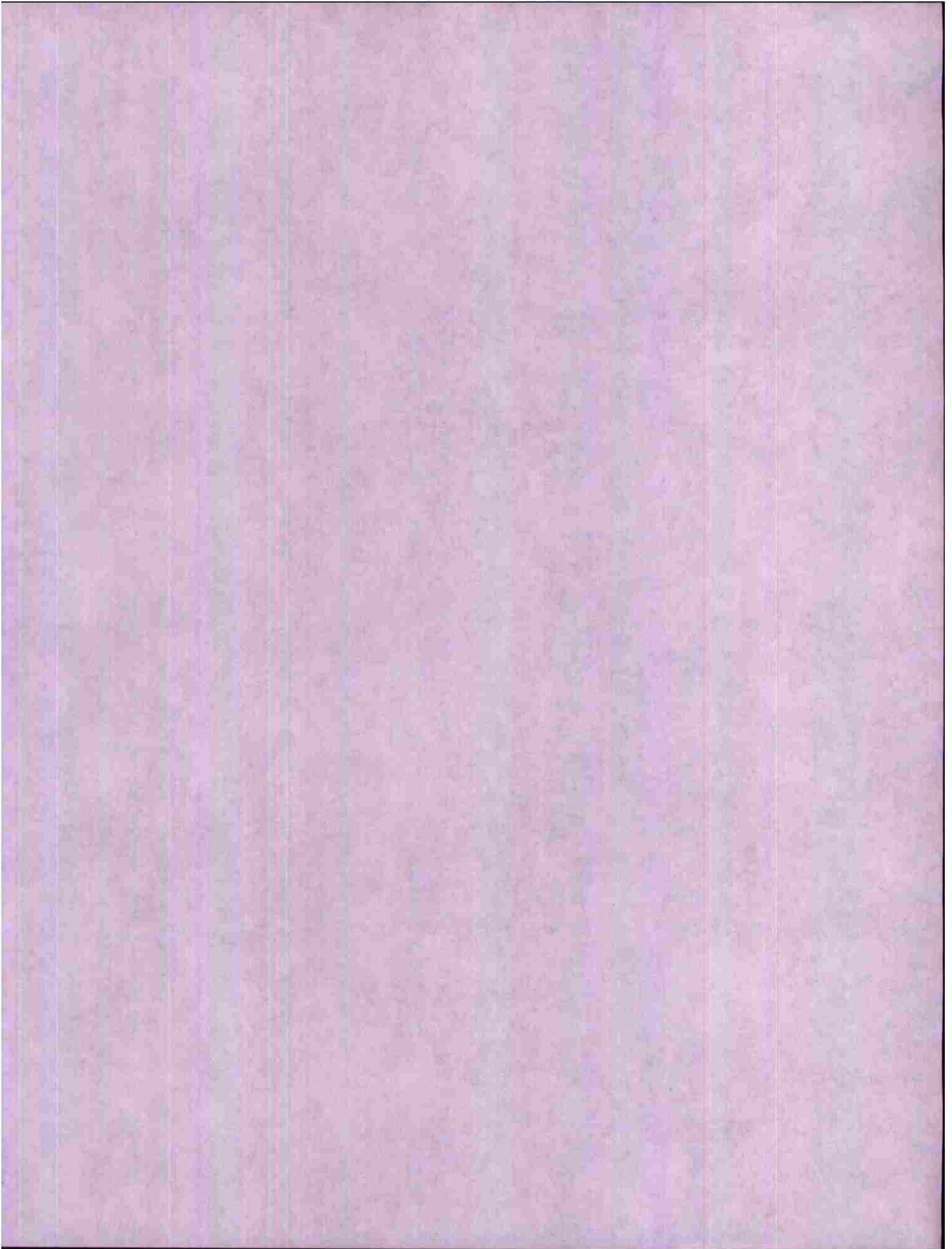
Nov 11, 1918

My dearest Mother & family,

Are you as happy as I am. No more worry for you mother and the rest. Happy, I'm so happy that I can't think much less write. Every (sic) is cut loose here. Wild that expresses it.

With all love your son.

Lovingly,
William



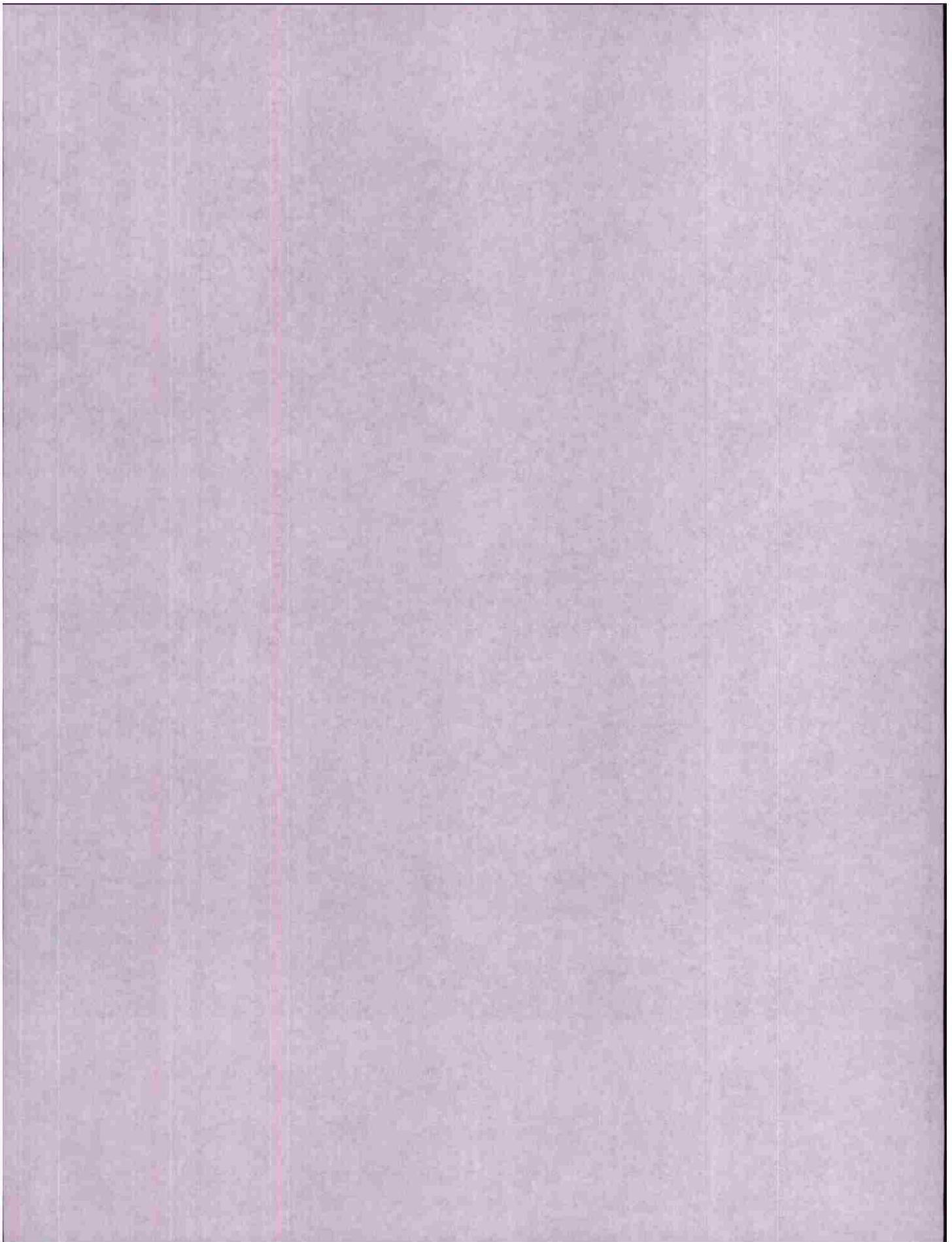
To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
From: William Keesler (w/sig ref to Sam)
Dec 5, 1918

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| 1057567 DOK |
| FILED 64 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Huntington Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-5402 |

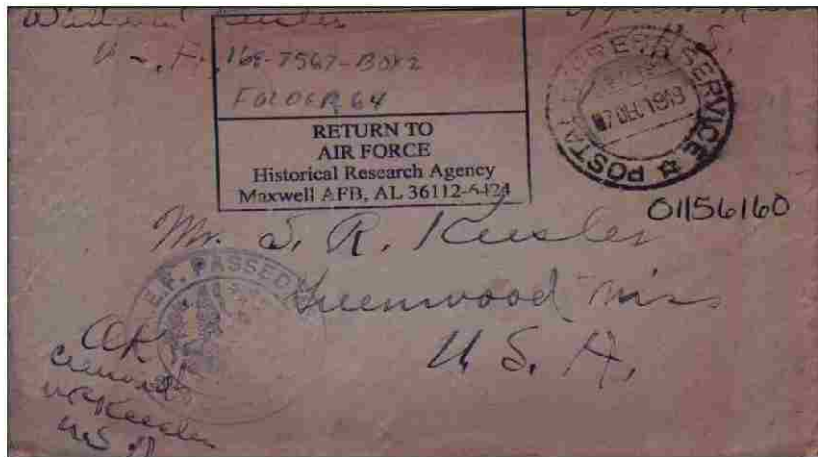
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that they will be good ones,
 if not. Sam has done
 his full & complete duty for
 country and home, and for
 us all. I hope of the time, then
 he did it in the harvest-
 time and most necessary
 way there could be. If this is
 so we must all remember
 that he gave to make the
 world the place we would
 have it a place of peace, but
 in still hoping to hear
 from him. Sister said
 Sam's last letter was dated
 Oct 5, since must have
 been close to that. Be sure

Dearest Mamma,

St 13 Elm Grove
 Dec 5 1918

That night I was out
 nearly all night on duty
 with the trucks, most of the
 time was spent standing
 beside the road waiting while
 while I was out there in
 the cold darkness, my heart
 and soul was with you and
 father at home. A big letter
 from Sister came today
 after I had returned telling all
 of how you are toward. Give
 written and telegraphed every-
 where I know here to my B.
 find out any more but no
 answers as yet. God great.

mother. She was left and left
 I checked & his wife & children
 you are may have been before this
 But if not you may be sure his
 father is outside having no stone
 left mentioned to find himself & will be
 last night or rather yesterday
 I was sent out with a letter to him
 in three men's tracks. We had left
 and left. He did not return
 until 10:30 A.M. I had to get
 up at 6 and go on then until
 now I've been working on them. In
 to be sent away again soon for
 motor equipment, don't know where
 or when or for how much. But I know
 we are to get some. Hope it won't
 be motor again. We are enough of them.
 Friday now we see the track.
 coming home. Last night some 1500
 men passed thru here. They were
 keeping and away and out of my
 all night. They were were having
 a big time at 1:30 A.M. I was &
 at 4 o'clock and still in the

him. Jack is a big comfort.
He is the best friend I've
got in the regiment.

Father and mother both
of you are grieved to the
extremest - but we must

remember that if I ever have
done this all, that the peace
he has in that peace
which you died for, and
is a peace greater and
better than we will ever

have.
God bless you all. I'm
as well as ever. With all

love your loving son

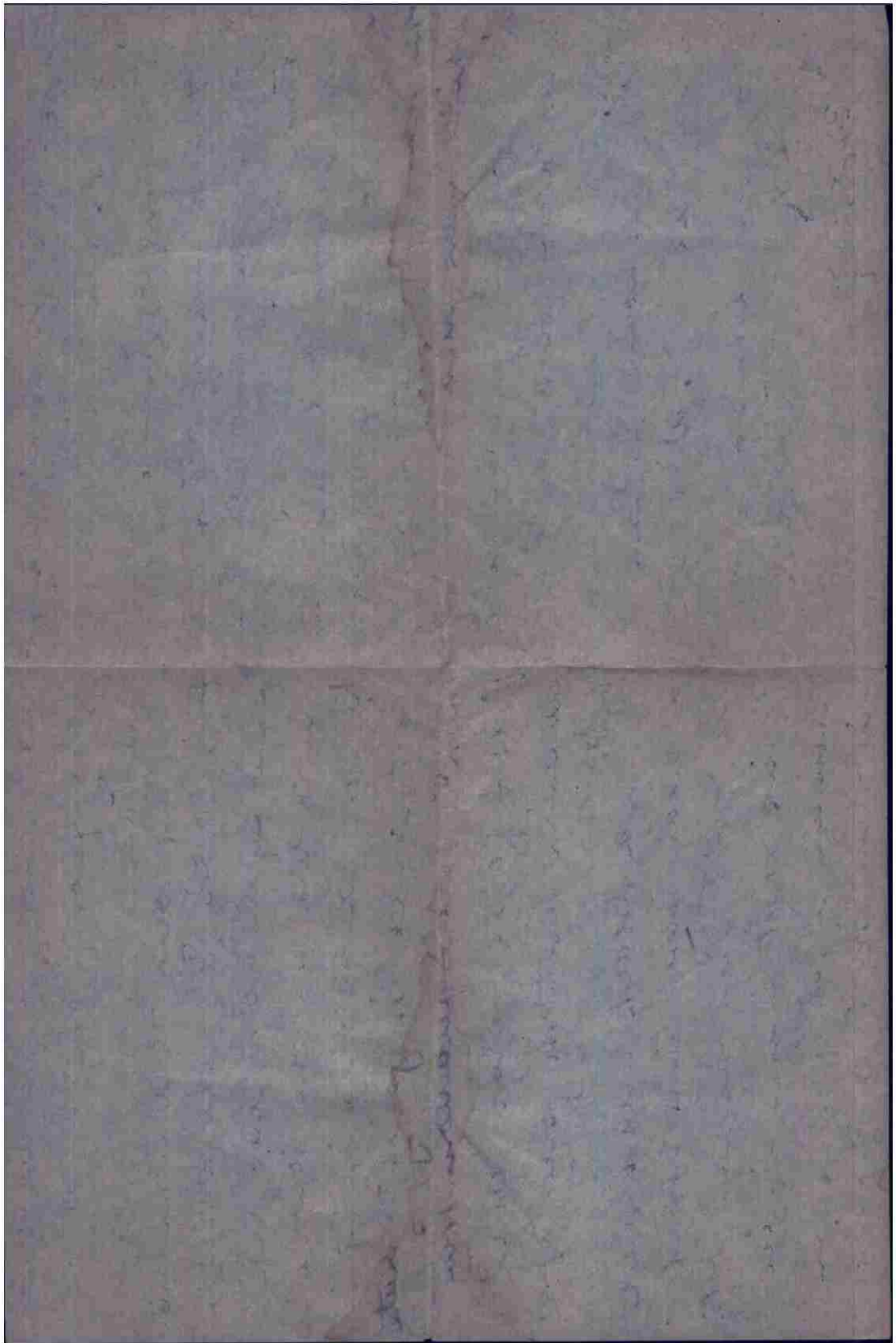
Wm
William

Wm
31657A

not most of them are only
going from one bullet to
another.

I'm going to write a letter
to a Lt. Higley who was with
Gavin's Squadron and ask
him to tell me the town where
he was located then if it is
in France I'm going to locate
the 24th Aero Squadron. May
I'll & go by stop and
inquire. But I'm going to find
out.

Jack Black and I had
a real long talk about
all this and he said that
I think that I can in in
Germany a Division & I
is then I'm going to find



Postmarked 7 Dec, 1918
 Postal Express Service
 From William P Keesler
 U. S. A.
 Officer's Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

St. Blin, France
 Dec 5, 1918

Dearest Mamma,

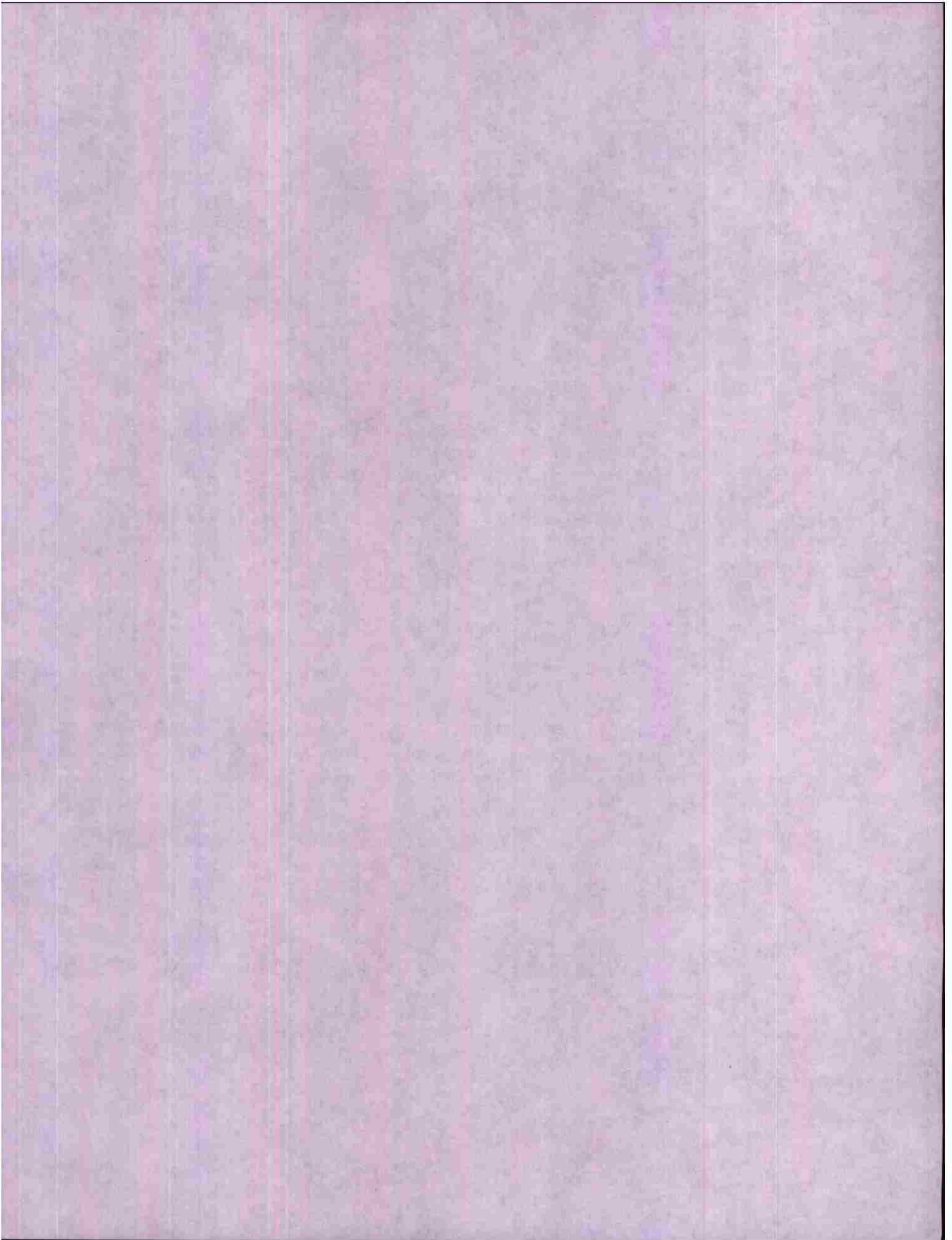
Last night I was out nearly all night on duty with the trucks. Most of the time was spent standing beside the road waiting and while I was out there in the still blackness, my heart and soul was with you and father at home. A big letter from Auntie came to-day after I had returned telling all I guess you all know. I've written and telegraphed every where I know here to try to find out any news but no answers as yet. Got grant that they will be good ones. If not and Sam has done his full & complete duty for country and home, and for us all back of the line, then he did it in the bravest way and most unselfish way there could be. If this is so we must all remember that he gave to make the world the place we would have it, a place of peace, but I'm still hoping to hear from him. Auntie said Sam's last letter was dated Oct 5, mine must have been close to that. Be brave mother. There are lots and lots of chances of his being a prisoner. You all may here even before this. But if not you may be sure his brother is certainly leaving no stone left unturned to find him, and I will too.

Last night or rather yesterday I was sent out with a detail to bring in three new trucks. We had lots and lots of trouble and did not return until 1 oclock A.M. I had to get up at 6 and from then until now I've been working on them. I'm to be sent away again soon for motor equipment, don't know where or when, or for how much only know we are to get some. Hope it won't be motorcycles. I've seen enough of them.

Everyday now we see the French coming home. Last night some 1500 men passed thru here. They were happy and dang and cut up nearly all night. They sure were having a bit time at 12:30 A.M. I saw a lot of American soldiers too yesterday but most of them we (sic) only going from one billet to another.

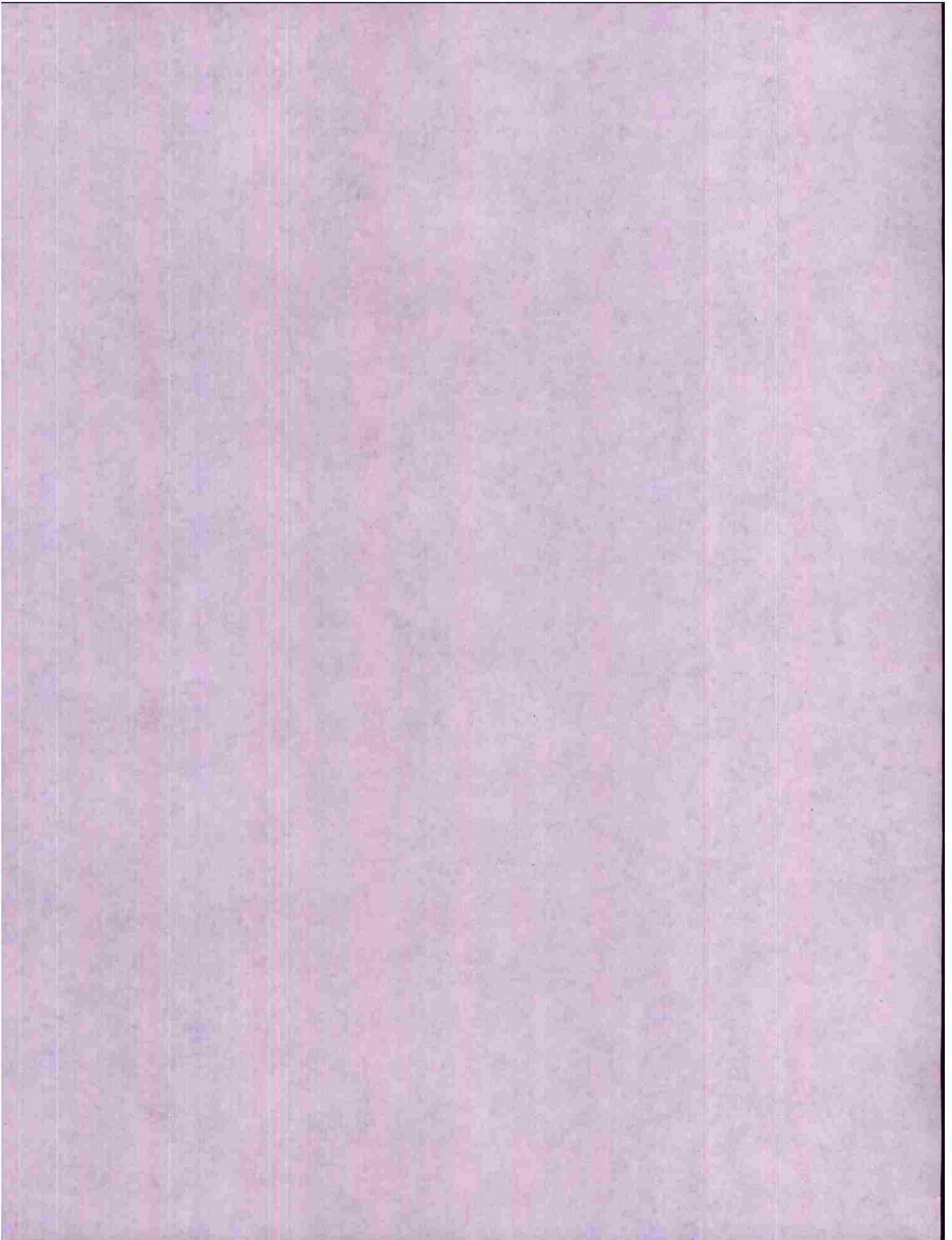
I'm going to write a letter to a Lt. Higgins who was with Sam's Squadron and ask him to tell me the town where he was located then if it is in France I'm going to locate the 24th Aero Squadron. Every field I go by I stop and enquire. But I'm going to find out.

Jack Black and I had a real long talk about all this and he and I both think that Sam is in Germany a prisoner. If he is then I'm going to find him. Jack is a big comfort he is the best friend I've got in the regiment.



Father and mother both of you are grieved to the utmost but we must remember that if Sam has done his all, that the peace he has is that peace which Jesus died for, and is a peace greater and better than we will ever have.

God bless you all. I'm as well as ever. With all love, your loving son,
William



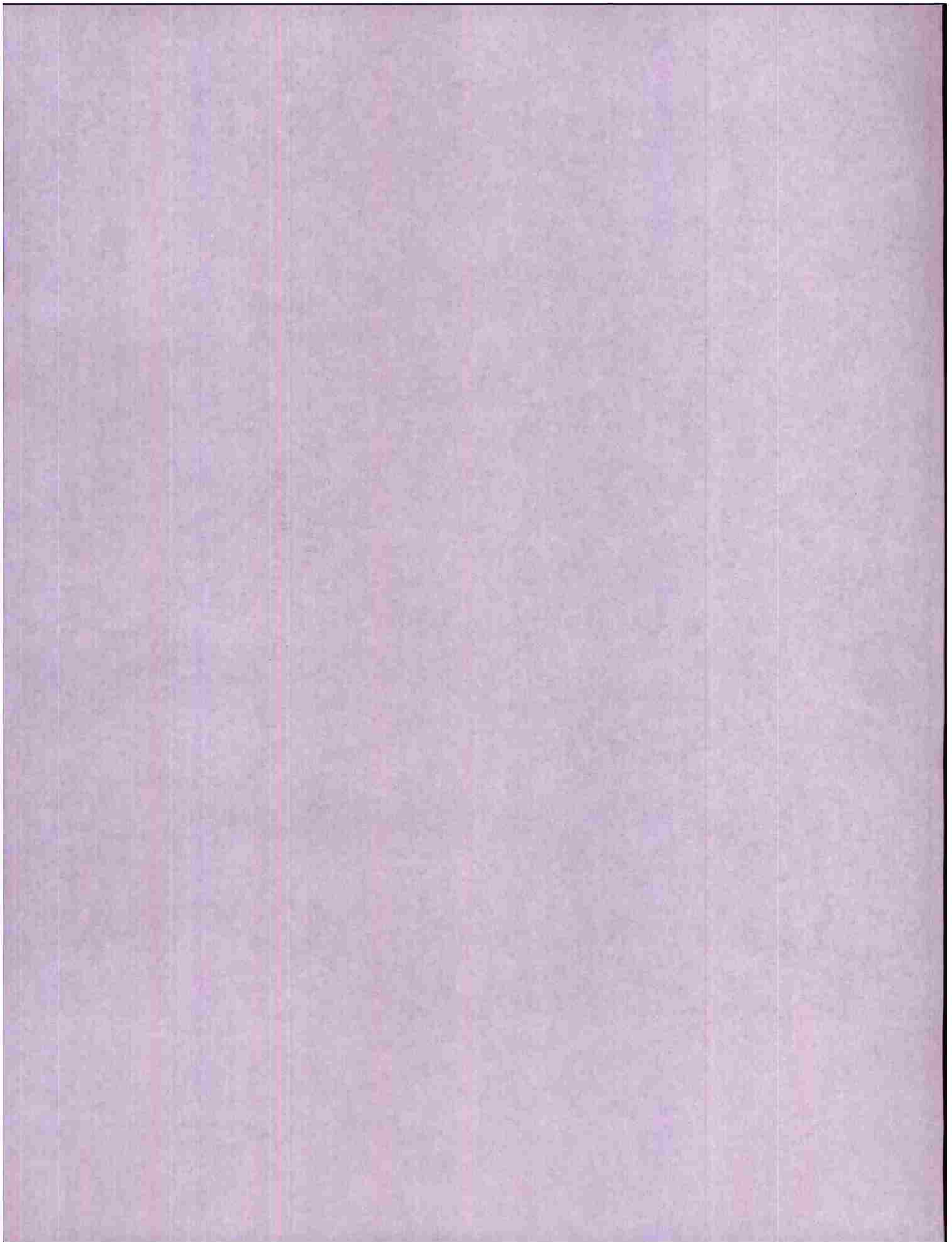
To: Mrs. Sam R. Keesler
From: William Keesler (w/sig ref to Sam)
Dec 9, 1918

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|---|
| Letter 9567-Box 2 |
| Folder 65 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Hickam Field, Hawaii Honolulu, APT. At 161-12-0514 |

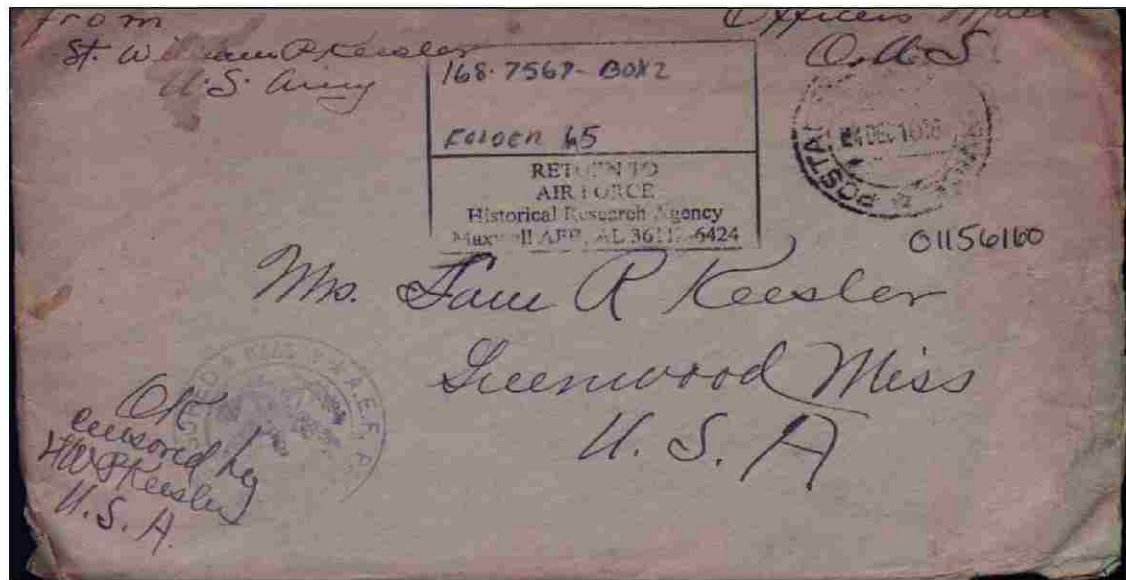
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morning in Nelson report. I received your letter, one from Auntie, Daisy, and the box to-day. I was as happy as I could be but to enjoy a box without Sam was something new, strange and awful to me. I couldn't believe it. I could not think, he must be a prisoner in Germany and we shall hear from him soon. I believe we shall. I'm writing Central Records Office again. I received father's letter from yesterday almost a week after I had gotten Shiraz's letter and also the ^{town} paper.

In Chamont which is some 33 kilometers from here I located everything we expect

Dearest Mother

St. Helen France
Dec 9 1918

Very night now since I wrote last we expect that I've gotten in late and been kept hard at it. But yesterday I could stand it longer we asked the Colonel for permission to visit Chamont, A.R.F. Idgr and he gave it. My heart has been asking for you and father every day and it seemed like I could not get a chance to express it. Words are useless and these seem to me too. So telegraphed, written and asked but no further news of Sam except S.H.Q. at Chamont replied the

the town where the 24th Squadron was
 opened the complete record I said
 during in France. They told me to a-
 bund in a few days and maybe
 they would have something else for
 me. We now found what the 24th
 Squadron was but I don't think
 they are there now as I have received
 no word of since directed there. Since
 we are near where I am at
 one time. I can not locate the 24
 exactly. But we gotten permission to
 go up there in a side car Sunday
 maybe sooner. Just as soon as I
 find out anything definite we will
 and besides we get 7 days leave and
 go there myself. We not be stopped
 until I find my mother somewhere
 come here. We have returned almost
 the But we know that way in good
 news. I pray God so. We are looking
 him for the best, and I know I
 he is taking care of him where
 his. What if just he will do and
 no matter how hard it might be
 if in best for the world it.

Eight now there is much
rumor of returning home but
my clock now is to find
some the home. But then I
want to stay, to find I see
is all I know now.

But I never that he'll be
and pictures came to-day. She
just knew I wanted those pictures
now I have the whole family.
And the rocks are fine, the
one of my roommate who
says if I don't keep them
under lock and key I'll
lose them.

The regiment is coming
along as usual. Nothing new,
except we have received a

the box came in good shape
and were little articles was
just fine! Well every one who
put anything in it I thank
them one and all many times
for the littlest thing and
best for the box which sent
them and was sent with the
box. That little space 9x4x3
was just filled to overflowing
with that love which only a
soldier far away can appre-
ciate or know and mother
dear we do know what it
means to you, to all the
mothers whose sons are
over here and fathers whose
sons are here.

3/6/42
Dear
A.C.

William

Dear son

Dear son

doing what best we know

never don't lose hope. God is

with you or you caught my feelings

He will show up & believe. I pray so.

Not win up and bring good news

himself sometimes saying a new

up for. I am a prisoner in

Dear! other and father don't give

some get.

leaving me in the cold. But I'll get

He has said it to some one else

to you. Well I had it relayed but the

I mentioned receiving some time

would mind rather do better duty.

with a letter but this late hour.

mother only I had relayed but

it was sent to the regiment for

to be sent. For there has been attacked

of course that my presence is

let's factors. Come in last night

Postmarked 14 Dec, 1918
 Postal Express Service
 From Lt. William P Keesler
 U. S. Army
 Officer's Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Mrs. Sam R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

St. Blin, France
 Dec 9, 1918

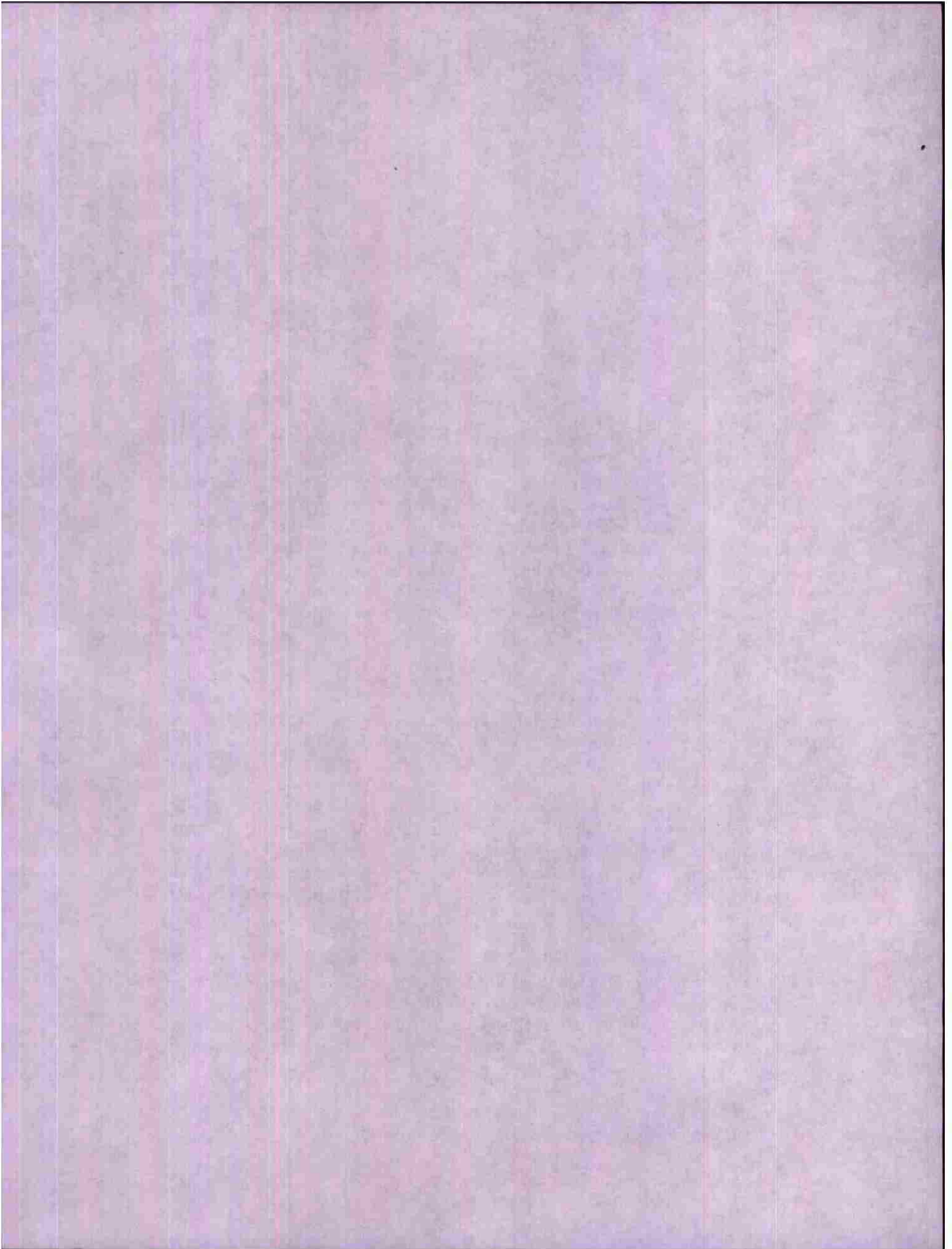
Dearest Mother,

Every night now since I wrote last except last I've gotten in late and been kept hard at it. But yesterday I couldn't stand it longer so asked the colonel for permission to visit Chaumont, A.E.F. & Hdqr and he gave it. My heart has been aching for you and father every day and it seemed like I could not get a chance to express it. Words are useless and deeds seem to be too. I've telegraphed, written and asked but no further news of Sam except G.H.Q. at Chaumont verified the Missing in Action report. I received your letter, one from Auntie, Dayer, and the box to-day. I was as happy as I could be but to enjoy a box without Sam was something new, strange and awful to me. I couldn't believe it. I could not think, He must be a prisoner in Germany and we shall hear from him soon. I believe we shall. I'm wiring Central Records Office again. I received father's telegram yesterday almost a week after I had gotten Elizabeth's letter and also the town paper.

In Chaumont which is some 33 kilometers from here I located every thing except the town where the 24th Squadron was. I found the complete record of Sam's doing in France. They told me to return in a few days and maybe they would have something else for me. I've now found where the 24th Squadron was but I don't think they are there now as I have received no word of wires directed there. Sam was very near where I am at one time. I can not locate the 24 exactly. But I've gotten permission to go up there in a side car Sunday, maybe sooner. Just as soon as I find out anything definite I'll wire and besides I'll get 7 days leave and go there myself. I'll not be satisfied until I find my brother somewhere some how. I've been stunned almost tho. But no news they say is good news. I pray God so. We are trusting him for the best, and I know he is taking care of Sam wherever he is. What is best he will do and no matter how hard it maybe it is best for He willed it.

The box came in good shape and every little articles was just fine. Tell every one who put anything in it I thank them one and all many times for the articles themselves and best for the love which sent them and was sent with the box. That little space 9 X 4 X 3 was just filled to over flowing with that love which only a soldier far away can appreciate or know and mother dear we do know what it means to you, to all the mothers whose sons are over here and fathers whose sons are here.

Right now there is much rumors of returning home. But my desire now is to find Sam the home. Until then I want to stay, to find Sam is all I know now.



Tell Dayer that her letter and pictures came to-day. She just knew I wanted those pictures now I have the whole family. And the socks are fine, the envy of my roommate who says if I don't keep them under lock and key he'll have them.

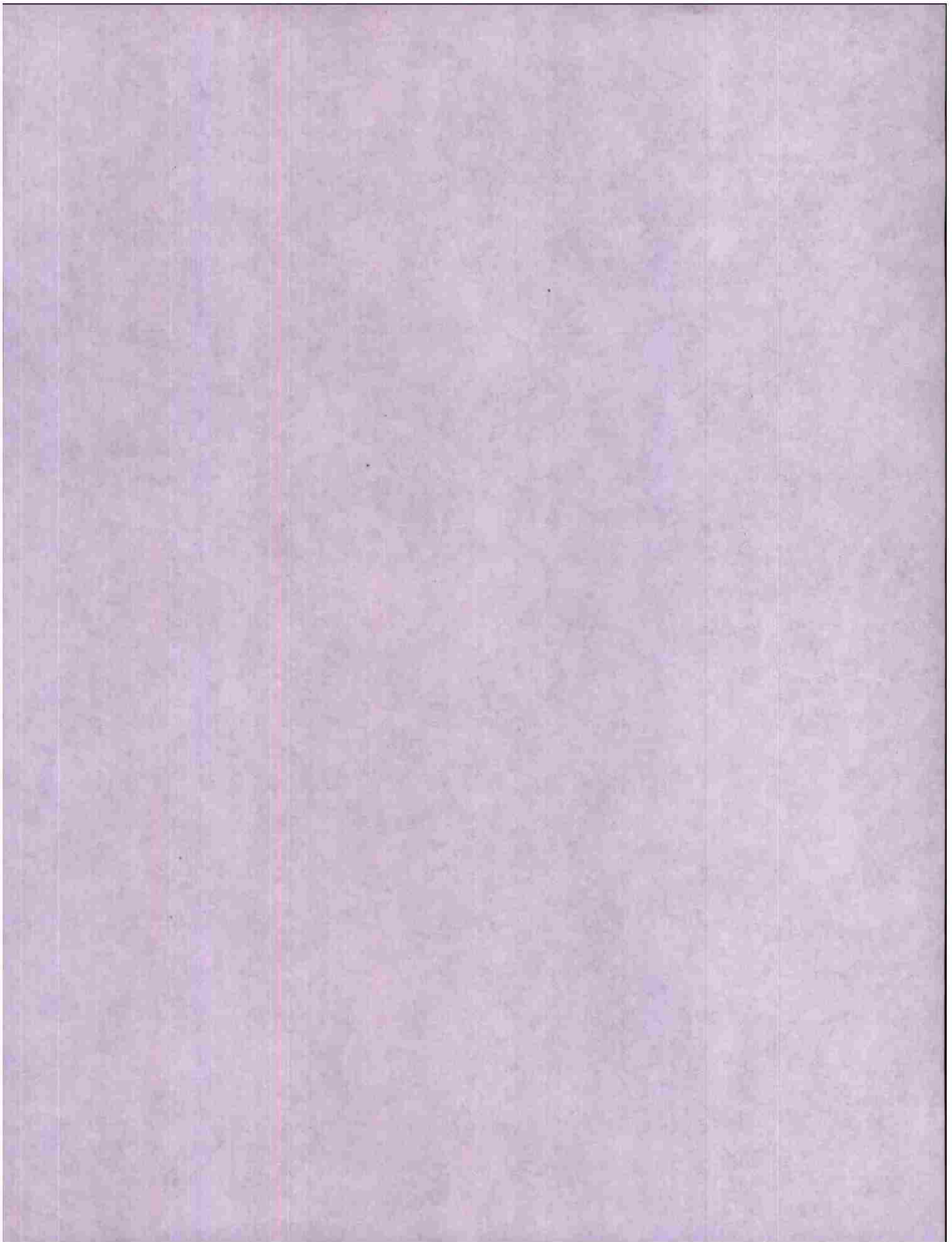
The regiment is coming along as usual. Nothing new, except we have received a lot of tractors. Came in last night. It seems that my experience is to be lost for there has been attached six new lieuts to the regiment for motors only. I had hopes of being put with a battery but they have flown. I would much rather do battery duty.

I mentioned sending some lace to you. Well I had it engaged but the old lady sold it to some one else leaving me in the cold. But I'll get some yet.

Dear Mother and father don't give up hope. Sam is a prisoner in Germany somewhere. Everyday a new list turns up and brings good news. He will show up I believe. I pray so. Until I can or you can get definite news don't loose hope. God is doing whats best we know.

Best of love.

Your devoted son,
William

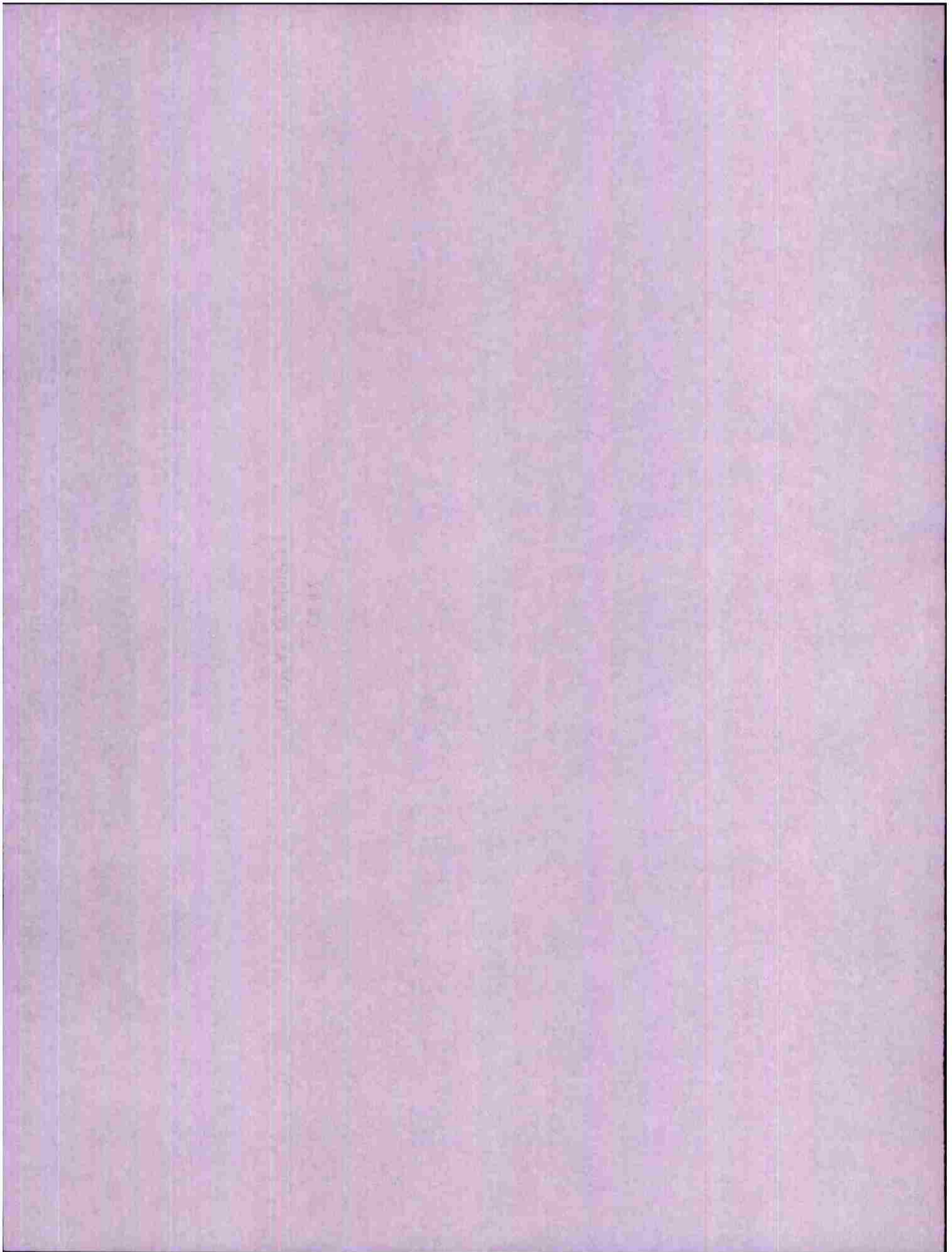


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| 168-7567-0012 | FOALCIN 66 |
| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Historical Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6924 | |

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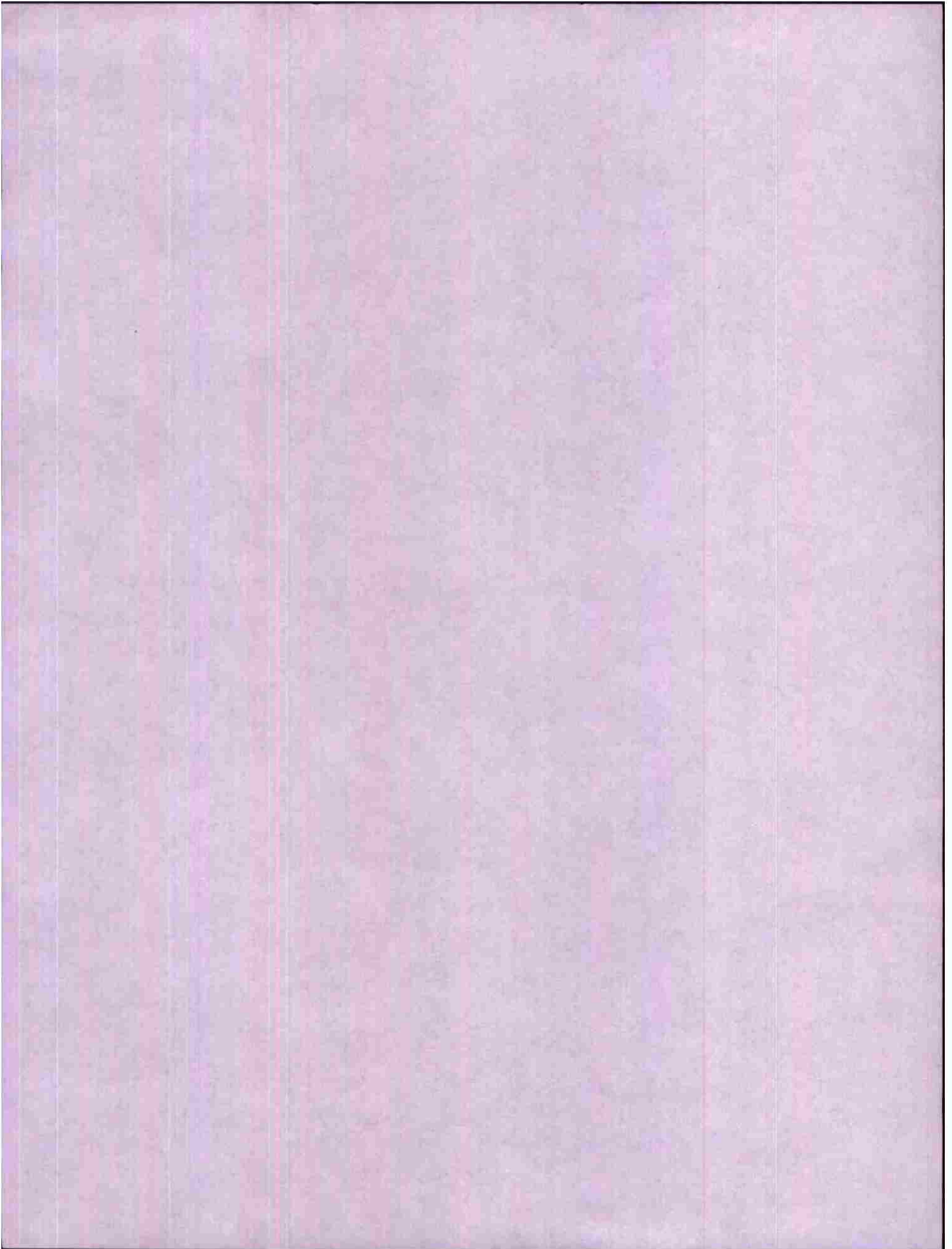


1687567-BOX 2

FOLDER 46

RETURN TO
AIR FORCE
Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

01156160

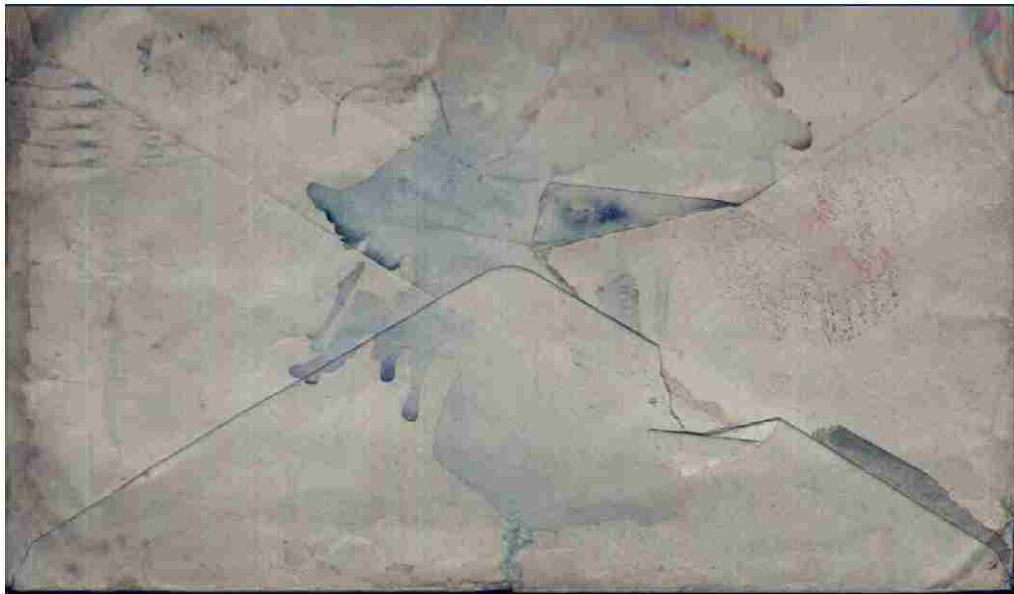


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2nd A. I. C.

Tours, France

Dec. 10, 1915

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Kessler,

Although I heard of Son's death several weeks after it occurred I have not written to you before as I wanted to get all possible particulars. I wrote to me of the boys in his Squadron and got an answer after a few weeks. Later I made inquiry at Red Cross Headquarters and went to see them about it when I was in Paris last week. So far this is all the information I have been able to get some of it is from Swinebroad, who wrote the letter, ~~who~~ was here yesterday.

Five teams of the Twenty-Fourth Aero Squadron were ordered to Soilly - the headquarters of the First Army - to do ^{Soilly} command plane work, special missions on the Army front. (Soilly is about fifteen to twenty kilometers south of Verdun and about ten kilometers west of the Meuse.) The five teams flew up to Soilly. They got there in the afternoon of October 9. I have a note in my diary that the weather was very bad that morning with low-hanging clouds and fog; as I remember, it was not much better

2
in the afternoon. However, somebody - probably the operations officer - wanted a plane to go out to reexamine the left half of the first Army front. They were to try to find out where the lines were - I think the attack was to be resumed on one whole front that morning. Sam and a pilot named Riley were picked to go.

They went off ^{at about 3 P.M.} flying very low on account of the clouds and because they expected to find the lines by seeing our infantrymen and not by picking up panels. They never came back.

None of the men in the Squadron saw the plane on the ground afterward. However, a balloon observer reported that he had seen a balloon falling that afternoon. The sector that Sam was flying over was along the Meuse just south of Din-sur-Meuse and to the east as far as Beaumont (I think that's the name of the town.)

The Red Cross sent inquiries to Sam and are still on the lookout. On the folder in their office they have a letter saying that the Headquarters of the Independent

The first of these is the fact that the
 the second is the fact that the
 the third is the fact that the
 the fourth is the fact that the
 the fifth is the fact that the
 the sixth is the fact that the
 the seventh is the fact that the
 the eighth is the fact that the
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 the ninety-ninth is the fact that the
 the hundredth is the fact that the

3.
 Air Force (British) reported that I was at
 Samuel R. Keeler was buried at ~~the~~
 La Mauriere Parish Cemetery. I am afraid
 this ends the hopes we had that he might
 be a prisoner.

I haven't been able to find where
 La Mauriere is but will write to the
 Independent Air Force about it and ask for
 any information they have.

The Red Cross woman said
 that organization would get any additional
 information they could and would try to get
 a picture of the grave. Probably, the Red
 Cross will work for several months yet
 and may be able to get this picture.

As you know, I was with
 Sam from the time he left America until
 we left Chetillon to go to the front. Then, as
 I went out a few days earlier, he went to
 a different squadron — I wrote him where
 I was but he couldn't get in as we were
 not at the front at that time and therefore
 not entitled to any more observers.

Through all this training
 period — and I am sure it must have been

4.

the same after he got to the front - Son was the same lovable, high minded boy that you knew. Being over here didn't harden or brutalize him. Rather it made him think more of his home - and hold more sacred the things he had left there. You can always think of him as the same boy you sent away to fight for truth and liberty - unless he was changed by a new self-sacrifice for others, something which may have developed more after he came to France and saw what some of the effects of war really were.

It goes without saying that he was popular. Since I have been here - a lot of pilots and observers have been detached from the squadrons at the front and are waiting here for orders home - so many have spoken to me about Son and expressed a very great regret that he had not come through. Some of them were fellows who I didn't think knew him at all.

I never saw a fellow

5

who was more anxious to do his work well. A half-done or poorly done mission didn't satisfy Sam. He wanted results and wasn't content to be excused because a pilot had mismanaged the mission or a camera had gone bad. Lt. Ledy often bragged about the way in which he did his work. Perhaps Sam might have come back from that last mission if he had not wanted to do his best. "His best" must have taken him well over the lines at a dangerously low altitude. I imagine he was hit by a bullet or shell from the ground.

What I want to offer you is not exactly sympathy, for we offer sympathy to the victims of some dreadful calamity. Rather I want to congratulate you on having such a son — a soldier who died at the first the taking desperate chances to answer the call of duty. He was no

6.

victim of a calamity; he made his choice and went to the front willingly, even happily. If he were my brother I would wear a gold star for him, but never black. He did not die as men die in peace times, seeing death afar off and waiting fearfully while death approaches. Some disregarded death because there were other things more important, things worth dying for if necessary. When he died he must have died suddenly and without suffering. It was nothing that no minister was with him to help him make peace with God: Christ Himself was with him and he had lived at peace with God all his life.

On one of his speeches Pershing said:

"Let your valor as a soldier and your conduct as a man be an inspiration to your comrades and an honor to your country. Consciously or unconsciously some fulfilled the requirements of that speech."

7.

I hope to be home soon - and am
 looking forward to it very much. It's not
 likely that I will see you this winter,
 but if I'm in Montreal next summer, I'll
 try to tell you all the details I can remember
 about our lives at the training schools:
 Jonze, Cagaux, and Chatillon-sur-Seine.

Please remember me to everybody
 I know. Give my love to Fannie Walton.
 With a great deal of love for you - I
 am

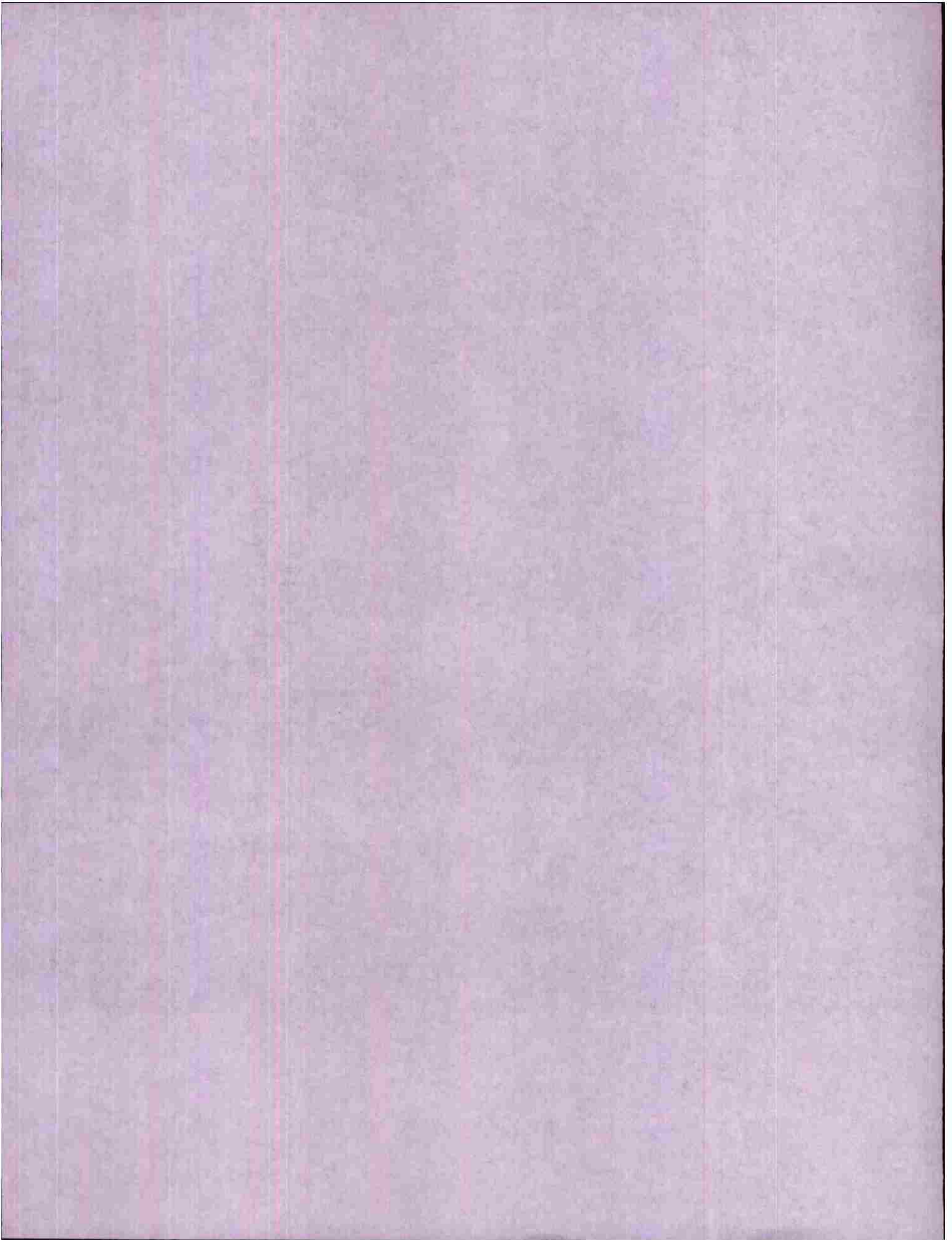
Yours very sincerely,
 Stuart Gilchrist

To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
From: William Keesler (w/sig ref to Sam)
Dec 22, 1918

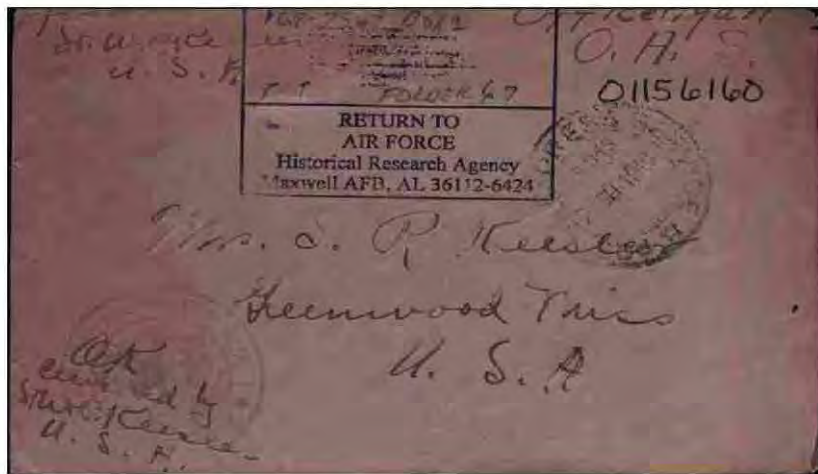
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| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Theoretical Research Agency Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6013 |

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the first man was this
 up near the officer and
 no change. The 2nd in charge
 removed me by hand not to
 me. Since he appeared like
 head at me. He told me
 the next time he would give
 a lot to make me smile.
 Almost another 100 give me
 right now; no how to
 in mean. I must be the only
 to-day and heard him as
 a mean to give me some
 answer or not of getting up
 now. He asked what did you
 told him, we said I could
 not do more but that is
 no comfort. But I heard
 the whole morning before.

Dearest Mother

21 Bill France
 Sunday Dec 22

Since my last letter
 which was written Sunday
 he not hear me now
 for a single night until
 last night and then I saw
 me out of the cold train from
 2100 mile ride in our
 truck to go tonight to bed. But
 in well and healthy than at
 all. I made two trips to Chicago
 one to River in truck and a
 three day trip to go in little
 4 days. Took three pieces
 up on the map I send you
 are are those things are here to

you have my money, we not
 give up hope, not one white kid
 and I pray for it and I believe
 soon and I believe we'll hear in
 going to shipment again to move.
 our writing the New York Herald to
 put in all it for my compensation
 about locate the 24th Aero Squadron
 at Ft. Tule we on the more &
 we must be keeping around.
 the Red Cross is helping the Red
 whether we make them or not
 in our. Don't give up hope.
 I know that in Tokyo, even if
 our Green when we see no.
 since it's near Tokyo just on
 been going all over the world.
 we traveled some 300 miles
 miles in all, London & back
 for Japan for 10 miles ago.
 and no wages. It is a great
 life but a fast one. After become
 made there will be few who can
 say they have seen more than
 them. I'm afraid when I get
 to Tokyo I may find that I

time. Every thing is that
 it each night since but
 more of a mist. It is
 but however, here to-day
 I had a lot of running
 around to do and got
 caught out with out a car
 and I got wet. It should
 really rain a good big drop
 or else rather.
 You will with the picture
 came to-day. In the picture
 was in, since mother. One
 always wanted just those,
 Howard & me and then, they
 are very nice. I am, father
 and I am the same. It is a

won't be helped, we, with
 is stronger than position
 so the say but they put
 it mildly. My room made
 has just declined a 100
 from home with "recovery".
 piano. It is not you a knock
 out of my way in my day
 and now. In fact, with
 ship looks and all, but
 there is no more in
 the world with a car like
 a picture of this mud. It is
 impossible. They call
 it since running but it
 is not he changed to "Muddy"
 since since since since since

me be so good to come up and
 see you coming at me. at
 you so much! I wish I there
 you many many times for
 from. I shall get a pocket folder
 to put them in. I mean that the
 shall go everywhere go and you
 as can be right away. the
 are just I think. I should like
 to former my "kumie" and he
 said oh but you have a young
 mother. But I said she is an
 young as her boy and daughter.
 I was made the as happy as
 have them. the my best friend
 of all. I thought had a lot out me
 from London. Now I always had
 an idea the English had a
 have idea of good things but
 that her given it. the best thing
 in it was the fact the English
 had out it. that made it good.
 I enjoyed it because of that fact.
 the world for a private opinion that

now too, to go to Hawaii.
 We are not waiting to show
 the beginning, spectacles of
 the Peace Conference. The
 money, or pity for the other
 make them pay and
 pay to remember the day
 that they brought the
 world to consider what
 we are achieving the 11th.
 month. We don't want
 to work to do over
 a picture as a star battle.
 We are getting a lot
 of experience from the
 motor cycle & trucks, but we
 are thousands of that we are

told us to use the
 money for things and
 to sell them, instead.
 The President since
 we were received with
 great ~~and~~ by the
 French. They take about
 nine or if they owned
 mine. We is to be in
 Champaign Tuesday. In
 hoping to see him, then
 come back. We is to go
 up to the front on Tuesday
 too. Don't imagine he
 will see me much. But
 we will see him
 a big time when he passes
 through St. Blaine and the

I'm in a home but in the
 next 10 days I think I'll move
 out of it because it's all
 over the place. I've been
 for St. John. A regular firm
 for the citizens, a show for the
 man and a regular big time
 all around. The bigger the better.
 the Y.M.C.A. is helping out.
 and the man are doing the
 best. I'm going to have a piece
 cake with my people.
 and me.
 I'm over now and get
 ready to leave early tomorrow.
 Keep up hope. With all love
 to you and lots for journey.
 your loving son
 William

Postmarked 23 Dec, 1918
 Postal Express Service
 From Lt. W P Keesler
 U. S. A.
 Officer Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

St. Blin, France
 Sunday Dec 22

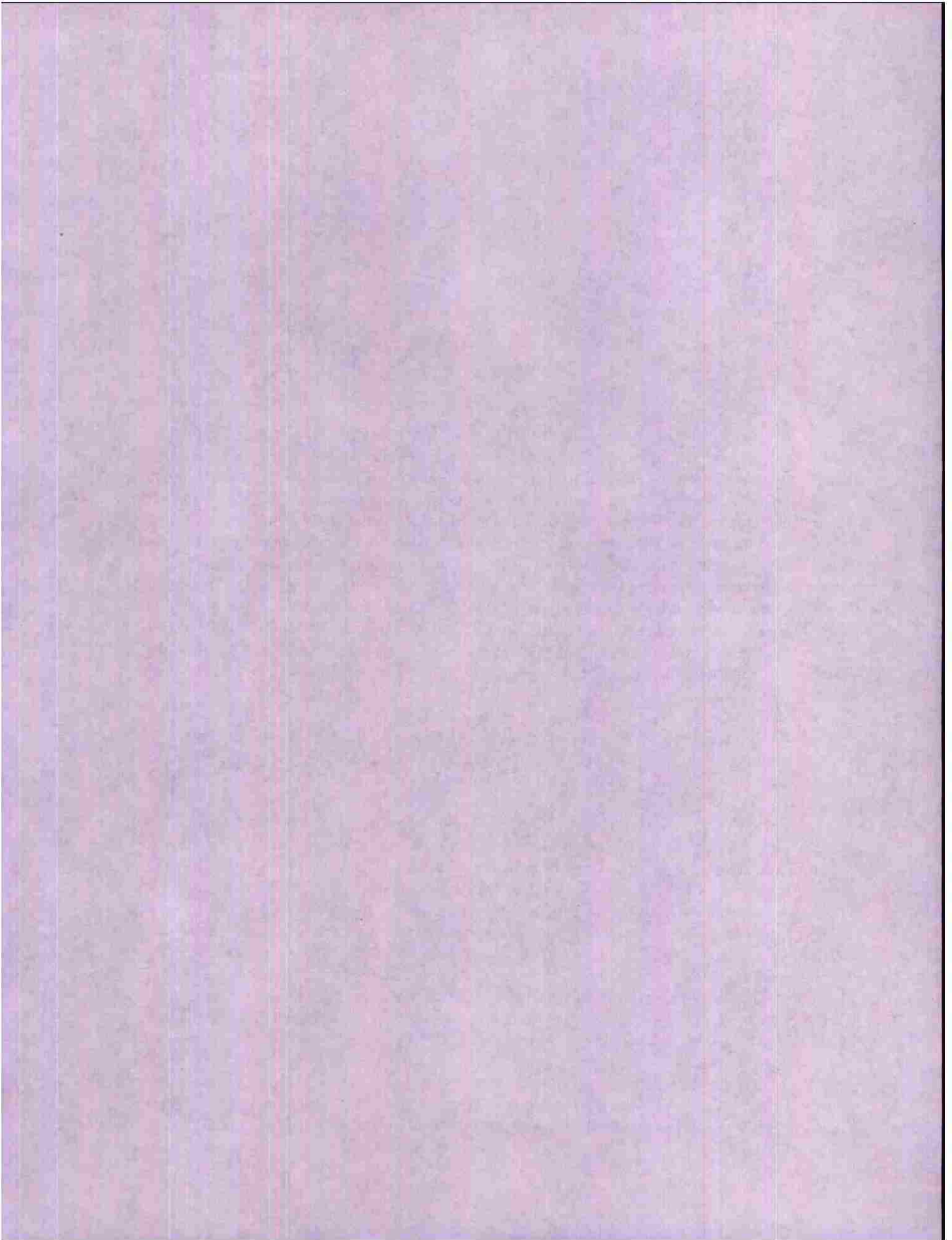
Dearest Mother,

Since my last letter which was written Tuesday I've not been in my room for a single night until last night and then I came in out of the cold & rain from a 100 mile ride in an open truck to go straight to bed. But I'm well and healthy thru it all. I made two trips to Chaumont one to Bas sur Autre and a three day trip to Is sur Tille and Langres. Look these places up on the map I sent you. On all those trips I've been to the department where they keep records of the officers and no change. The sgt in charge knows me by heart now & every time he shakes his head at me. He told me the last time he would give a lot to make me smile. Dearest mother I'd give my right arm, no both to hear news. I went to the colonel to-day and asked him as a man to give me some advice or way of getting information. He asked what I'd done. I told him, he said I could not do more but that is no comfort. But I know we shall hear, perhaps you have by now. I have not given up hope, not one little bit and I pray God to let us know soon and I believe we'll hear. I'm going to Chaumont again to morrow. Am writing the New York Herald, to put in an ad for any information.

Can't locate the 24th Aero Squadron either. They are on the move & sure must be hopping around. The Red Cross is helping too. Dear mother we shall hear soon I'm sure. Don't give up hope. I know God is taking care of our Sam where ever he is.

Since I've been transferred I've been going all over the country. I've traveled some 300 hundred miles in all. Tomorrow I leave for Dijon for 10 motor cycles, and 20 bicycles. It is a great life but a fast one. When I come back there will be few who can say they have seen more of France than I. I'm afraid when I get to telling of my wild tales that I won't be believed. The truth is stranger than fiction so they say but they put it mildly. My room mate had just received a Kodak from home with "beaucoup" films. I'll send you a snap shot of myself in my in my daily garb now. Lin hat, slicker, hip boots and all. But there is no Kodak in the world which can take a picture of this mud. That is impossible. They call France sunny but it should be changed to Muddy. Rain, Rain, Rain all the time. Only thing is that it really isn't rain but more of a mist. It is wet however. Take to-day I had a lot of running around to do and I got caught out without a slicker well I got wet. If it should really rain a few big drops I'd feel better.

Your letter with the pictures came to-day. I'm the proudest boy in France mother. I've always wanted just those. How I treasure them. They are along side Sam, fathers and Elizabeths now. It makes me feel so good to look up and see you smiling at me. It helps so much. Mother



I thank you many many times for the. I shall get a pocket folder to put them in and then they shall go everywhere I go and you & I can be together always. They are fine I think. I showed one to Palmer my "Bunkie" and he said "Oh but you have a young mother." And I said she is as young as her boys and daughters. It had made me so happy to have them. The very best present of all.

Elizabeth had a box sent me from London. Now I always had an idea the English had a false idea of good things but that box proved it. The best thing in it was the fact the Elizabeth had sent it, that made it good. I enjoyed it because of that fact. She asked for a frank opinion of it. I told her to save the money for stamps and to send letters instead.

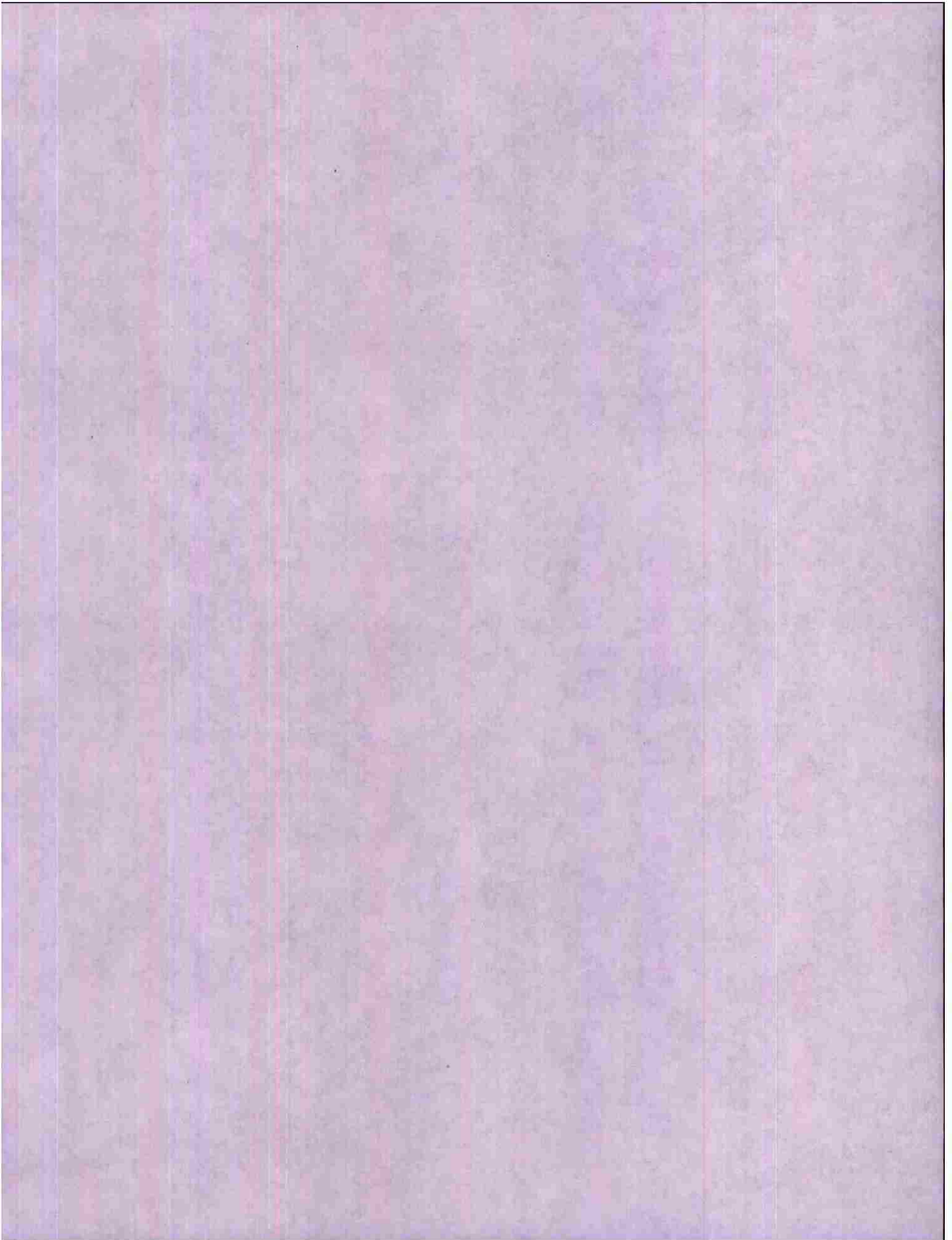
The President sure has been received with great enthusiasm by the French. They talk about him as if they owned him. He is to be in Chaumont Tuesday. I'm hoping to see him. When I come back. He is to go up to the front on Tuesday too. Don't imagine he will see very much. But we will sure give him a big time when he passes thru St. Blin and he was too, to go to Nancy. We are all waiting to hear the beginning speeches of the Peace Conference. No mercy, or pity for the Huns. Make them pay and pay to remember the day that they brought the world to sorrow is what every soldier in the A.E.F. wants. We don't want our work to do over again at a later date.

We are getting a lot of equipment now. Tractors motor cycles & trucks but no one thinks of that. All are thinking of home. That is the most talked of thing. Home and what it means to us all. I believe we shall leave in Feb.

We are planning a big Xmas for St. Blin. A regular Xmas tree for the children, a show for the men and a regular big time all round. The bigger, the better. The Y.M.C.A. is helping out O.K. and the men are doing the rest. I'm going to have a pecan cake with my pecans you sent me.

Must close now and get ready to leave early to morrow. Keep up hope. With all love to you all and lots for yourself.

Your loving son,
William

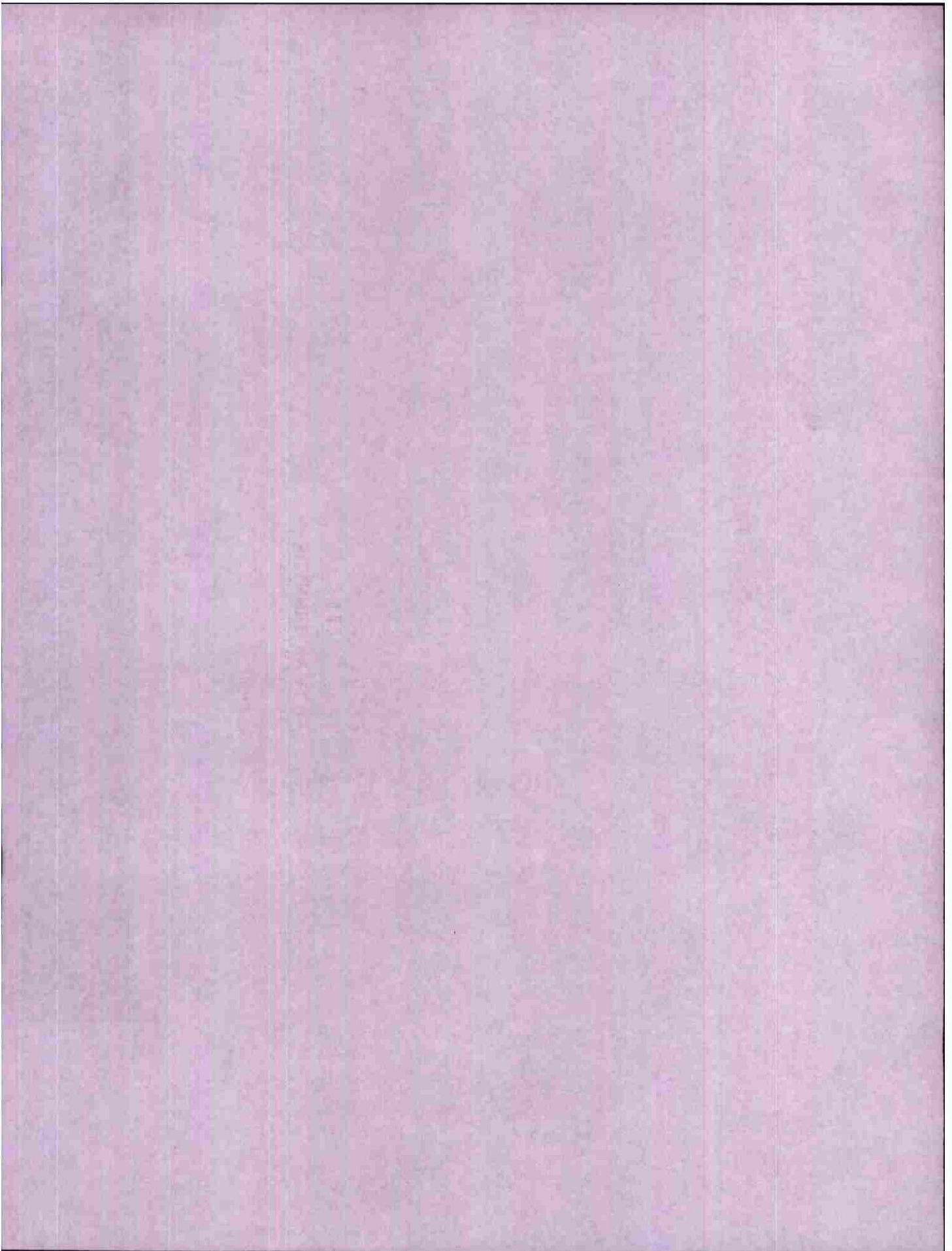


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Derek, J. P.

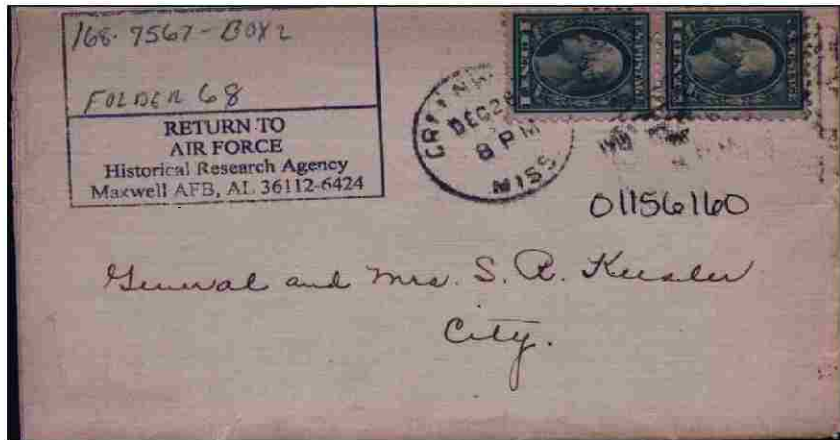
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2007

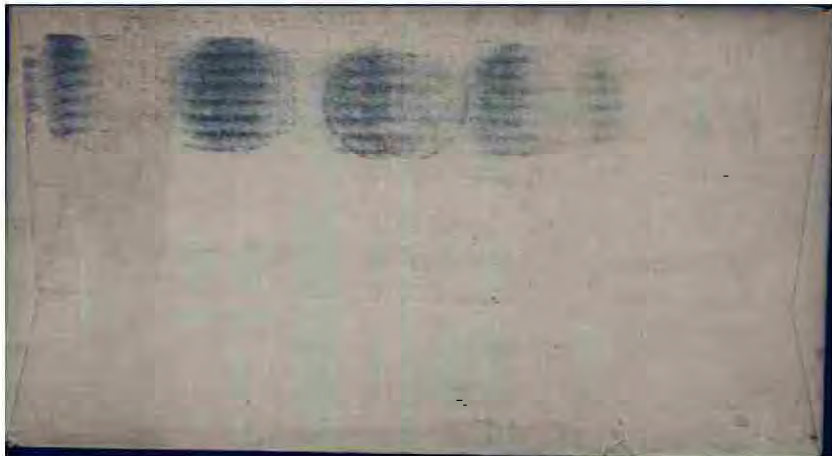


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to say each time that I came to sell you, but, somehow, the time went by and I never did say them. I am so glad that you want me to come to your house often for you are both so good, so kind, so cheerful, that it feels me a great deal. Some times I feel that I can't bear the loneliness of it all, so I put on my hat and run around to see you. When I see how bright and cheerful you, his mother and father, have be, I try to be brave too. It is true that you have loved

Shenandoah, Miss.
Dec. 26, 1918.

Dearest Howard and Mrs. Heeler,

How good and sweet you have both been to me!

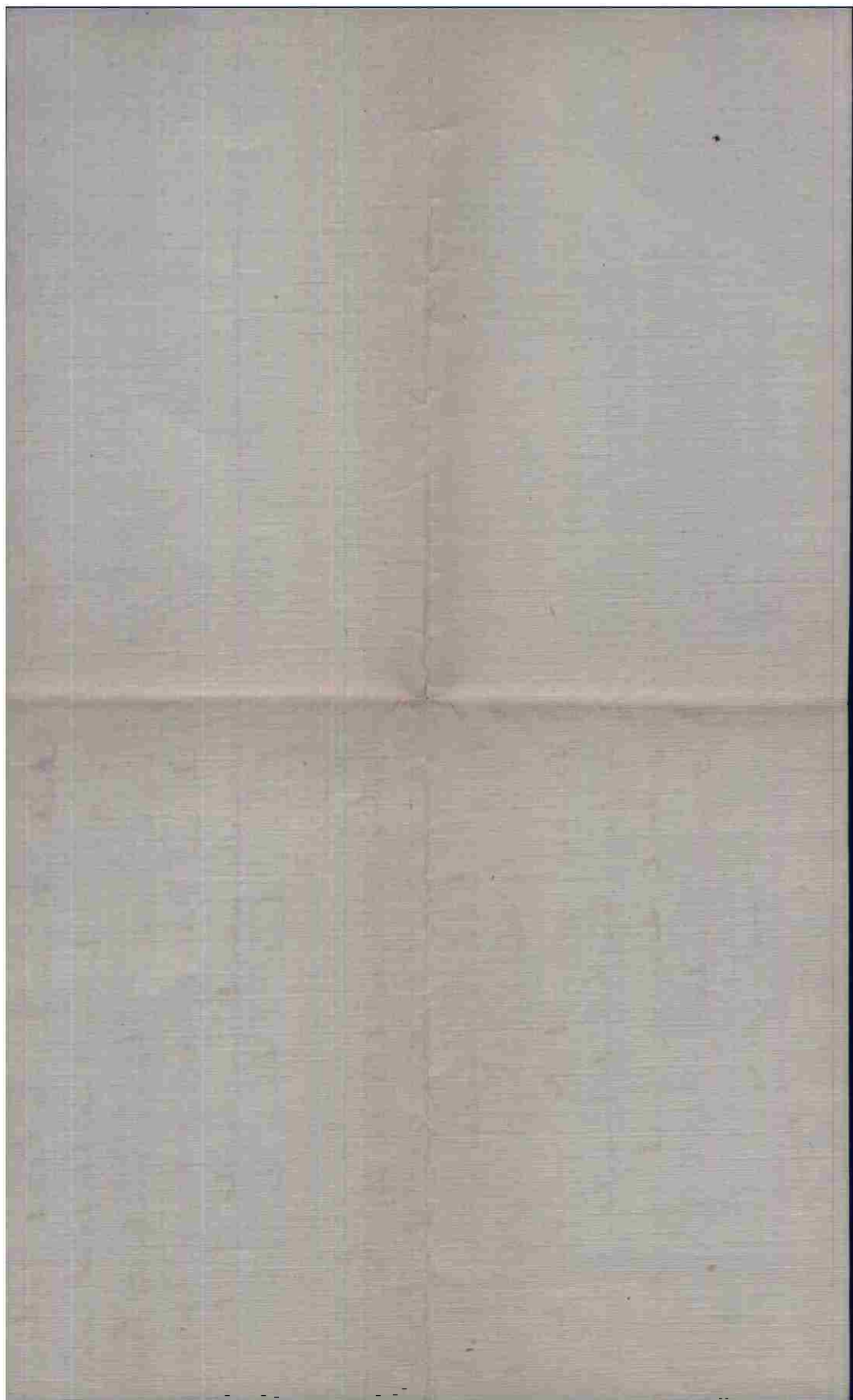
And how I do love you both. Yesterday morning when I saw Heeler brought me the tin and your precious note, I had to go off and have a big cry. I wasn't expecting anything but all - and didn't expect anything - and when I saw what a regular beauty, the tin was, it seemed infinitely more. There have been so many things that I have intended

dear Sam for twenty two years and
 I have loved him for many years,
 but what a wonderful journey years
 they were. And I loved him with my
 whole heart, so one now has a record
 there. And for the last two years,
 I had thought of nothing else but
 the time when Sam and I would
 be married and have a darling little
 home of our own.
 Is my Sam steady for all that was
 that and most went with me in life -
 a husband, a home, and children. But
 God did not intend that those should
 be mine. Sam has finished his life,
 his work has been done and done well.
 When the crushing news of his death
 came - I had felt all the time
 that he was all night, hopelessly
 safe. He was, safe with God - I felt
 as if I didn't care to live any more,
 that life would not be worth living.
 But this was wrong. And the army doctor
 has worked for me yet to do and I must
 live the fact I can, in order that
 our boys may not have died in vain.

But, it seems so hard to have
to give up one so perfect as
Sam was. I have tried to hear
it as bravely as I know Sam
would want me to do, but I
feel that I have failed miser-
ably.

This is intended to be a
check you "listen" for the beauty
in which I share wear and
tear because Sam's mother and
father gave it to me. The time
is far the kindness for me and
I don't deserve such goodness
at your hands.

Sincerely yours,
F. B. I.
+ Anne Wilson



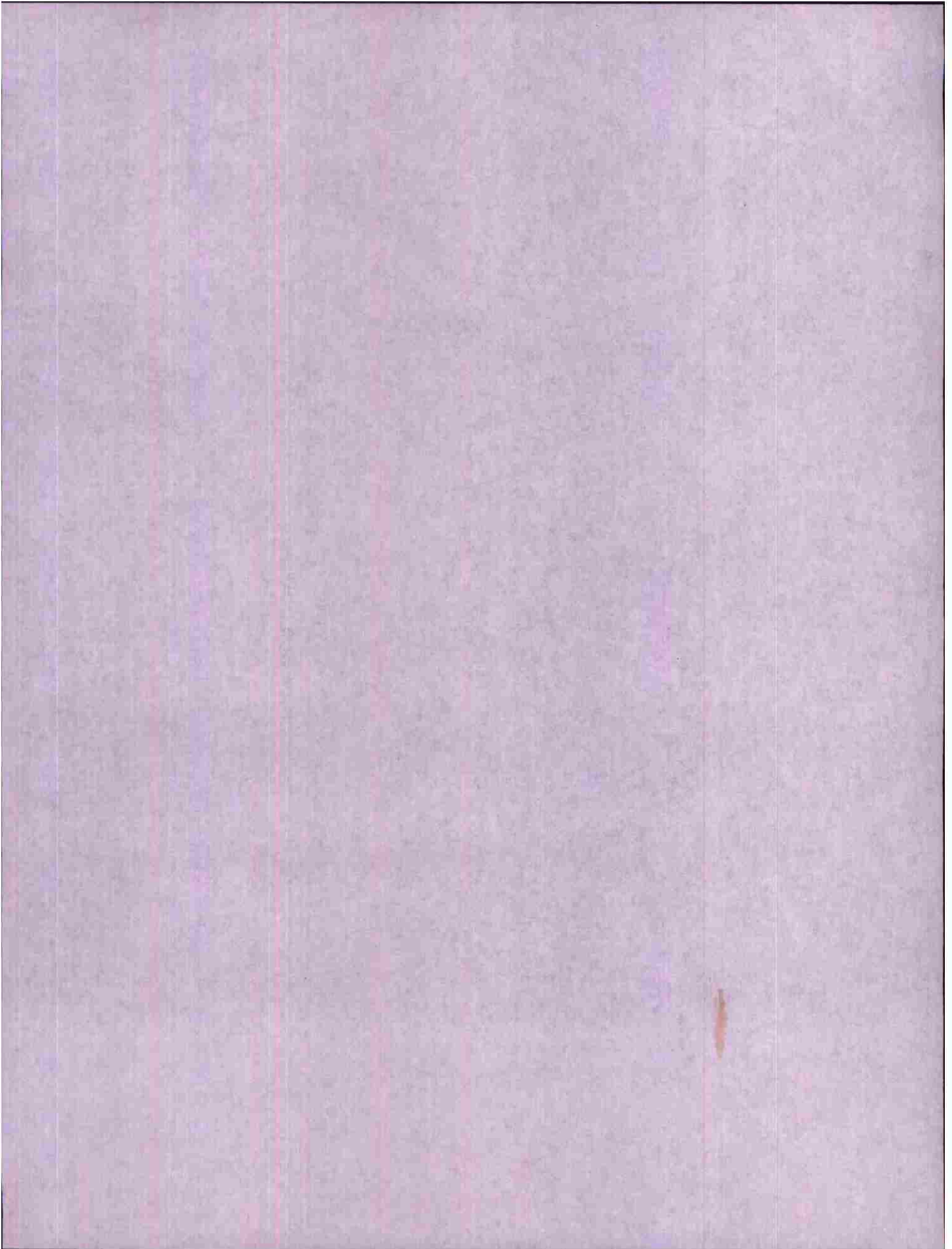
To: Gen. S.R. Keesler
From: William Keesler (w/sig ref to Sam)
Dec 26, 1918

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AIR FORCE
Hazardous Research Agency
Memphis, AR, AT 34112-1034

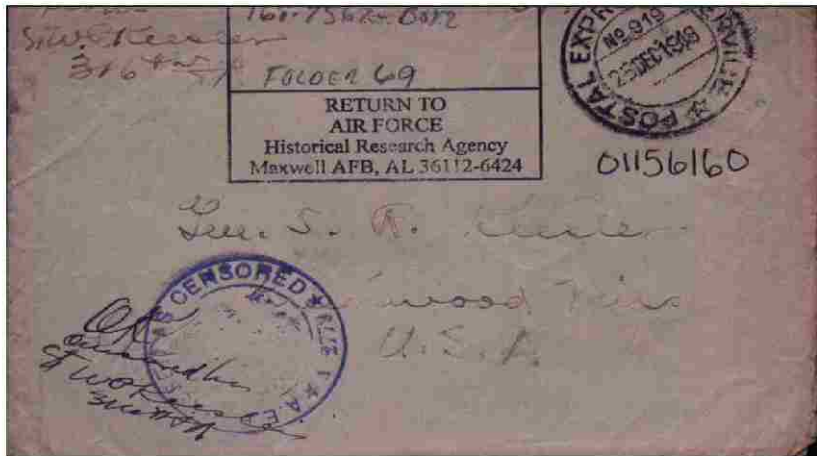
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would die, doing his duty
to the utmost, for country,
for loved ones, for freedom,
for all those who had fought
before him and for peace
and all those heirs of the
past. To and do little to comfort
us now but we must use
these or else our hearts must
bleed heavily I would be with
you to regret the loss of him
but as an other a soldier
and still doing duty for your
and country, I send my
good words of comfort and prayers
to you. The awful suffering
is over but we cannot
move. God has taken him
into a better place, replace
there nothing but peace

St. Blime, France
Dec 26, 1918

Dearest Father and Mother
tonight I try to write
words of comfort. There words
do as little to comfort. Peace has
come to the world but before
it came our Son had made
the greatest sacrifice a man
ever made, he gave his all
his life, that we his heir and
loved ones might live in a
world made better. Today I
received a letter from his
Squadron commander
telling how he had been at
his post doing his duty when
the shell came. We both knew
him well I all feared he died
as a soldier and as we
know all American soldiers

come over he and we make it
 the day to come when we can be
 to gether in that same peaceful place
 with him. We shall be waiting to welcome
 us just as we would like to welcome
 him home back here on earth.
 to-day I had to wait you but the
 order on cancer which was making
 since we were prohibited. But in
 trying again in the morning when
 in going before the colonel again I
 heard the men from his com-
 mander which I received. At no the
 just was in good from it was
 inquiring about it. There seems to
 be danger now here. From the letter
 from the Squadron Commander, I take
 it I am and in pilot with me
 command of the pilot from the big
 several guns and were over the
 since when they left. The letter from
 the pilot was from Germany so
 they must have gotten in the evening
 coming in during my last to locate
 the pilot said if I do need he is
 in Paris and going to him to

the children of St. Paul. Their joy and happiness was very good to see. It was a day St. Paul will not forget for quite a while. The parents know now why the Americans love the freedom we are here to ensure. The words of Lincoln and Statefulness were great to hear. The major made quite a little speech thanking us. Last night Jack Black and I had quite a long talk. Jack is sure a fine fellow and he has said little has given me more comfort than any of the other fellows who

like to live, to learn when we have no music and then in going to his grave. J.H. I will let me and I think they will let me in Major in driving to his home grave. I shall know and see for sure. Did they say that there is some chance.

I was I spent my quiet, for I could not hear to think of a noisy language when I heard something. I have been so nervous that I could not write. I couldn't sleep any more. The regiment sent a man to see with a regular Scout. Please for

They all have been great to me.
 My trip to Lyon was a bad one. At
 arrival see the way down and I
 and my men got reaching 100. At
 was not so cold as we found myself
 coming back had over it was not
 all. We started out with pack about
 cold weather. Then at day's end some
 in information from home, it started
 raining, then we had a miserable
 time. After I had made a special
 effort to get men who could drive
 motorcycles I found that I had to
 drive one myself to get them all
 there. When I took one which would
 be taking it off any to well and about
 half way home I began having trouble
 with all the spare parts which
 make it impossible, then rain would
 get in the engine, then about
 10 miles from home it started
 raining. And it was dark by then
 and I had no light. Over coming
 along, much home too when you
 out of the darkness at head of me.

moved all a while came
 along and pulled me in.
 I found that one
 of the machines had not
 got in and out I had to
 go again I find him, I
 did not find him but found
 the machine that was in
 a ditch. I went for two more
 trucks and by digging +
 pulling got him out OK. At
 that time I was by there
 him so I turned in a letter
 saying the regiment
 gave a shower and a dinner
 I passed by coming to my

cause a yell. Then to the
 "Big Blue". I did and
 went into the ditch. But
 after I got straightened out
 I found on the road
 more signs pointed
 under a motor cycle +
 side car. None of mine was
 there. I pulled the car off
 him and found he had
 a back hurt by and shoulder.
 I stopped a car and went
 in to the hospital. But that
 time I found that my engine
 had stopped and nothing I
 could do would start it.
 Well there I stopped and

Postmarked 28 Dec, 1918
 Postal Express Service
 From Lt. W P Keesler
 316th F.A.
 Officer Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Gen. S.R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

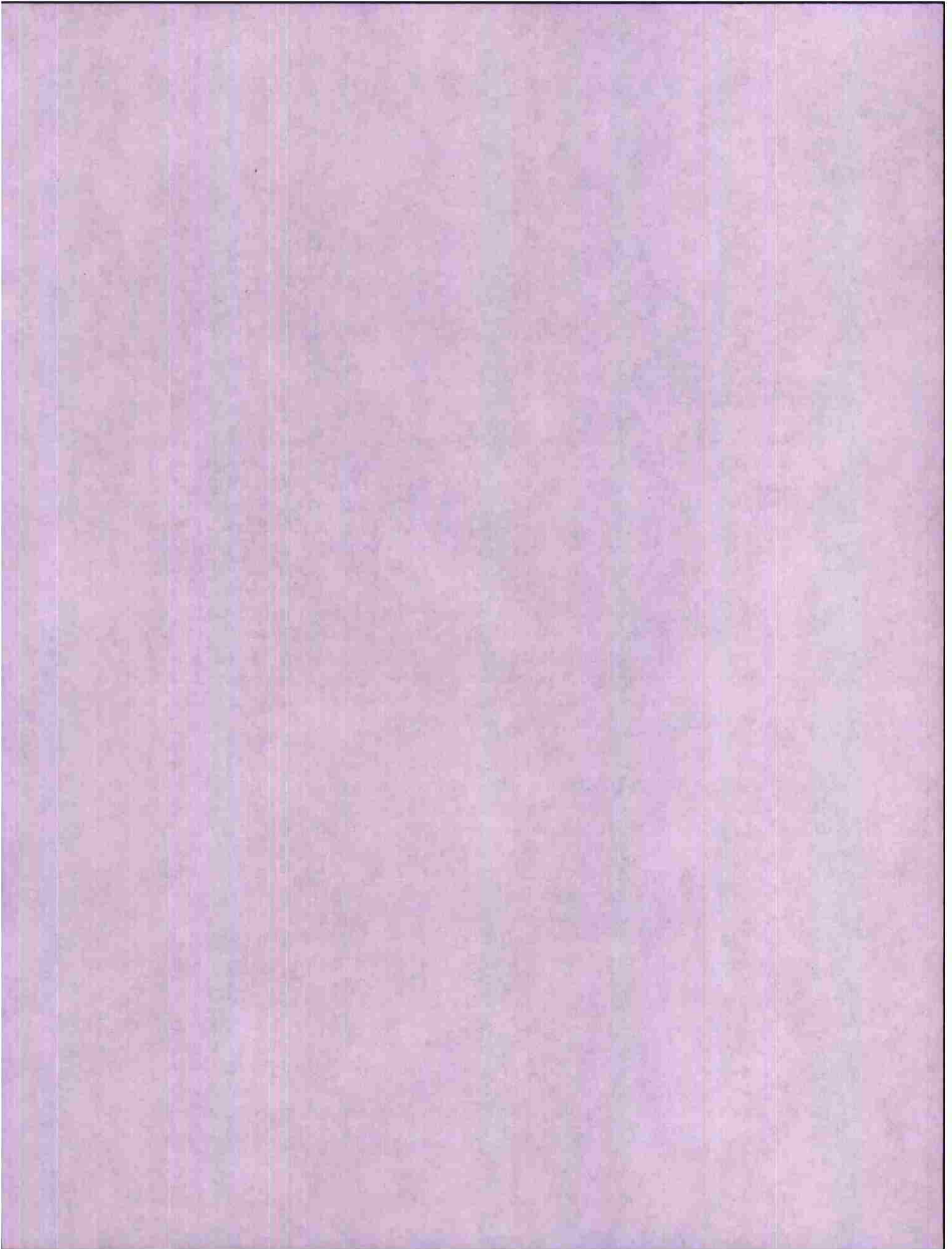
St. Blin, France
 Dec 26, 1918

Dearest Father and Mother,

Tonight I try to write words of comfort where words do so little comfort. Peace has come to the world but before it came our Sam had made the greatest sacrifice a man can make, he gave his all his life, that we his kin and loved ones might live in a world made better. Today I received a letter from his squadron commander – telling how he had been at his post doing his duty when the call came. We who knew him best of all know he died as a soldier and as we know all American soldiers would die, doing his duty to the utmost, for country, for loved ones, for freedom, for all those who had fought before him and for France and all those heroes of the past. Words do little to comfort us now but we must use them or else our hearts burst. Dear family I would be with you to-night in our sorrow but as I'm still a soldier and still doing duty for you and country, I send my poor words of comfort and prayer to you. The awful surprise is over but we know now. God has taken him into a better place, a place where nothing but peace can ever be and we who are left behind must pray and wait for the day to come when we all can be together in that same peaceful place with him. He shall be waiting to welcome us, just as we would have welcomed him home back here on earth.

To-day I tried to wire you but the orders on censor which say nothing can be written prohibited. But I'm trying again in the morning when I'm going before the colonel again. I enclosed the letter from his commander which I received. It is the first word I've gotten from all my inquiry. Central Records office seems to be closed or very slow. From the letter from the Squadron Commander, I take it, Sam and his pilot were in command of the fire from the big naval guns and were over the lines, when they fell. The letter from the pilot was from Germany so they must have fallen in the enemy territory. I'm doing my best to locate the pilot and if I do and he is still in Paris I'm going to him to talk to him, to learn where our Sam is buried and then I'm going to his grave if G.H.Q. will let me and I think they will. They let Major Manning go to his brother's grave. I shall know and see for sure. Till then I still hope that there is some chance.

Xmas I spent very quiet, for I could not bear to think of a merry Xmas when I knew nothing. I have been so nervous that I couldn't write, I couldn't stay in my room. The regiment gave a Xmas tree with a regular Santa Claus for the children of St. Blin. Their joy and happiness was very good to see. It was a day St. Blin will not forget for quite a while. The parents know now why the Americans love the freedom we are here to ensure. The words of thanks and gratefulness were great to hear. The mayor made quite a little speech thanking us. Last night



Jack Black and I had quite a long talk. Jack is sure a fine fellow and he (sic) tho he has said little has given me more comfort than any of the other fellow tho they all have been great to me.

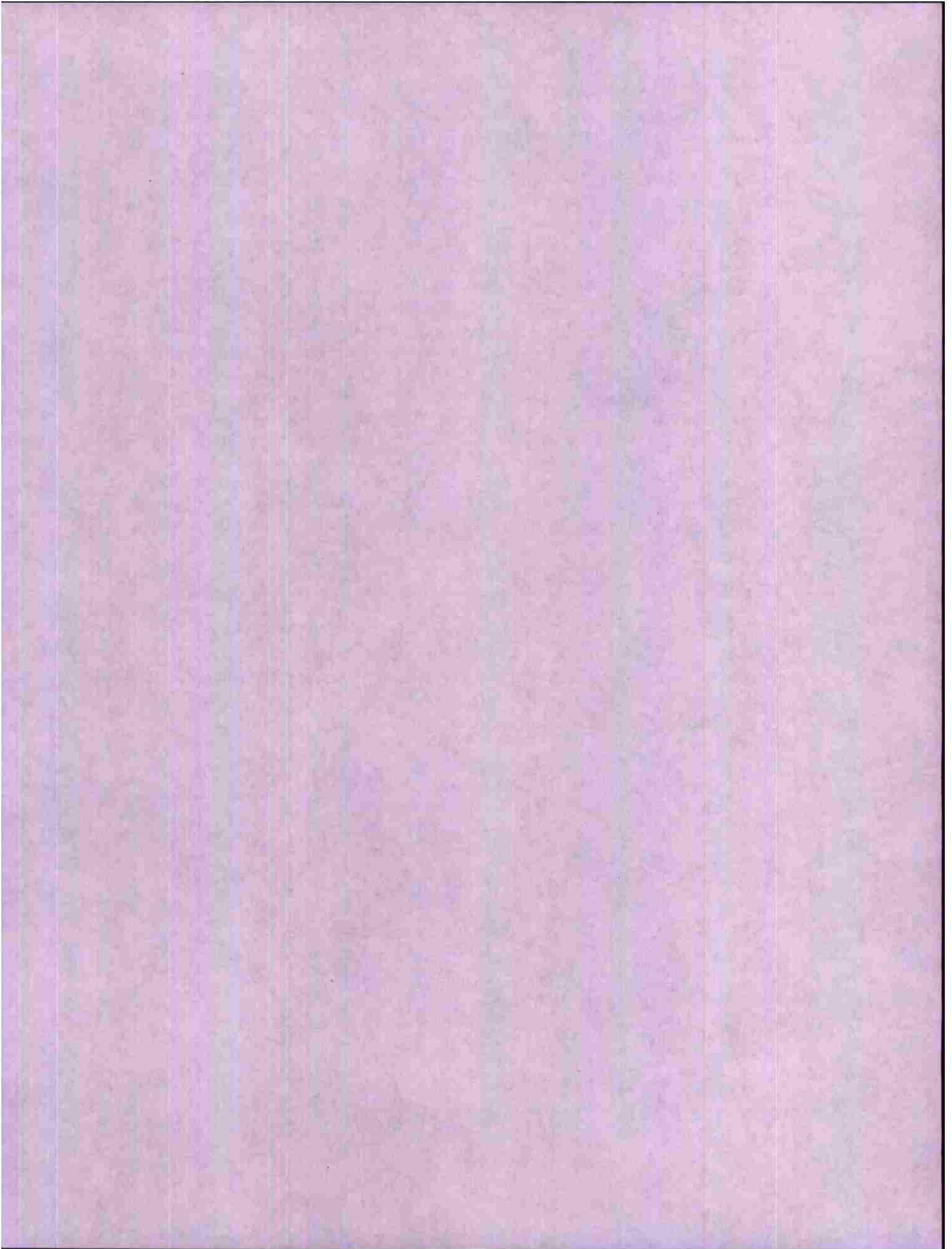
My trip to Dijon was a bad one. It rained all the way down and I and my men got soaking wet. It was not so cold so we fared very well. Coming back how ever it was worst still. We started out, with fairly clear & cold weather. Then at Laugre some sixty kilometers from home, it started raining, then we had a miserable time. Altho I had made a special effort to get men who could drive motorcycles I found that I had to drive one my self to get them all here. Well I took one which wasn't behaving it self any to well and about half way home I began having trouble. Water on the spark plugs would make it miss, then rain would get in the carburetor, then about 10 miles from home it started snowing and it was dark by then and we had no lights. I was creeping along, nearly home too when right out of the darkness at head of me came a yell, "Turn to the Right Quick." I did and went into the ditch. But after I got straightened out I found on the road a man lying pinned under a motor cycle & side car. None of mine however. I puller the car off of him and found he had a badly hurt leg and shoulder. I stopped a car and sent him to the hospital. By that time I found that my engine had stopped and nothing I could do would start it. Well there I stayed and waited till a truck came along and puller me in. Then I found that one of the machines had not got in and out I had to go again to find him. I did not find him but found one of my trucks stuck in a ditch. I sent for two other trucks and by digging & pulling get him out O.K. It was nearly Xmas by this time so I turned in a tired boy.

To-day the regiment gave a show and a dance. I passed by coming to my room, they seemed to be having a nice time. I hoped so.

I must stop now dear people. Altho we can not be together, we can be united in our sorrow, and pray for strength to say, "God will be done." Be very good to poor Fannie Walton. My heart break when I think of you mother & her.

I'm well.

With all my love,
Your loving son,
William

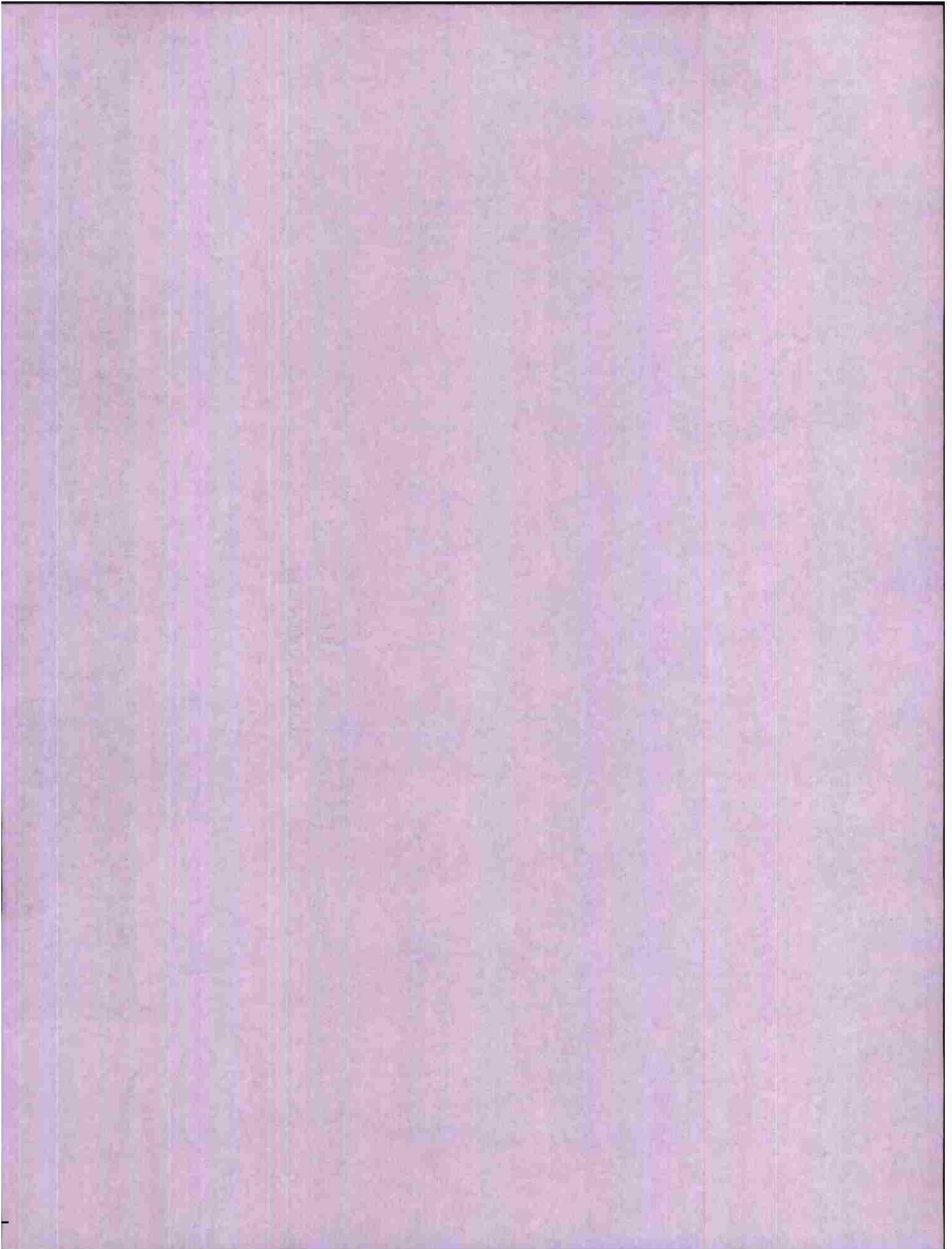


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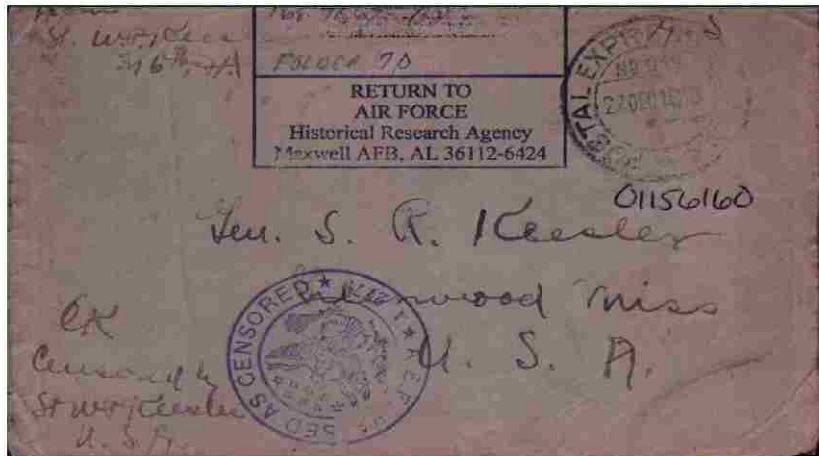
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| RETURN TO AIR FORCE Responsible Agency AF 41-0112-0424 | |

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you three were best the
 officers won't take it, as
 it is against censorship
 orders. To-day I put in a
 request for a leave to do
 a year's work, & will learn
 all you may be able to
 see going to London to
 in England was, for
 not to leave St. Martin's (the) Pilot
 in a pilot but things are
 so mixed up now, with so
 much too much more
 but it may be possible to
 see & see. I'll be
 as ever, father.

When after writing, I
 in so much of time
 in a clean

St. Blin, France
 Dec 21 1918

Dear father

Your letter of Dec 2

replied of the coming of my
 letter of Nov 1-11-12 & was

To-day, father you have
 friends to my & never mentioned
 same. I received your cable

about Dec 8 & was a week
 after I had been to the
 front same. While there I
 saw them & the same I have
 just had a letter over a
 month old from same. You
 know the same all I can.
 I was away from my
 request for a year's
 work. I have tried to visit

So far more & my wife &
 to Central Bureau office have
 given me my information. What
 I learned at Chennam, was absolutely
 nothing. Chennam - still not
 even that the 9th Squadron there
 knew in any way. At least
 knew to me. I never met with with
 the spirit at all. It's covered only in
 something, I just like a starting
 man chosen before a medal. You
 even not realize how long it
 things are. Why but whole against
 was sent from the Bangalore for us.
 They did not know when we were.
 But I shall not leave France
 without knowing all.
 I don't want to have in the
 morning to the C.O. about the matter
 for I will tell you
 My son
 William
 30-7-74
 30-7-74

Postmarked 27 Dec, 1918
Postal Express Service
From Lt WP Keesler
316th F.A.
Officer's Mail
O.A.S.
To: Gen S.R. Keesler
Greenwood, Miss
U.S.A.

St. Blin, France
Dec 27, 1918

Dear Father,

Your letter of Dec 2 telling of the coming of my letters of Nov 1 – 11 – 12 came to-day. Father you perhaps know why I never mentioned Sam. I received your cable about Dec 8 over a week after I had heard thru Elizabeth about Sam. Mail travels faster here than cables and I had just had a letter over a month old from Sam. You know I've done all I can. I was away from my regiment for over two weeks. I have tried to wire you three times but the officers won't take it, as it is against censorship orders. To-day I sent in a request for a leave to do as you said. I will learn all, you may be sure. I am going to-morrow to where his squadron was. I've tried to locate Lt Harold W. Riley, Sam's pilot but things are so mixed up now, with so much troop movements that it may be a month before I can hear. I'll do all I can, father.

Watch after mother, she is so wonderfully brave and dear.

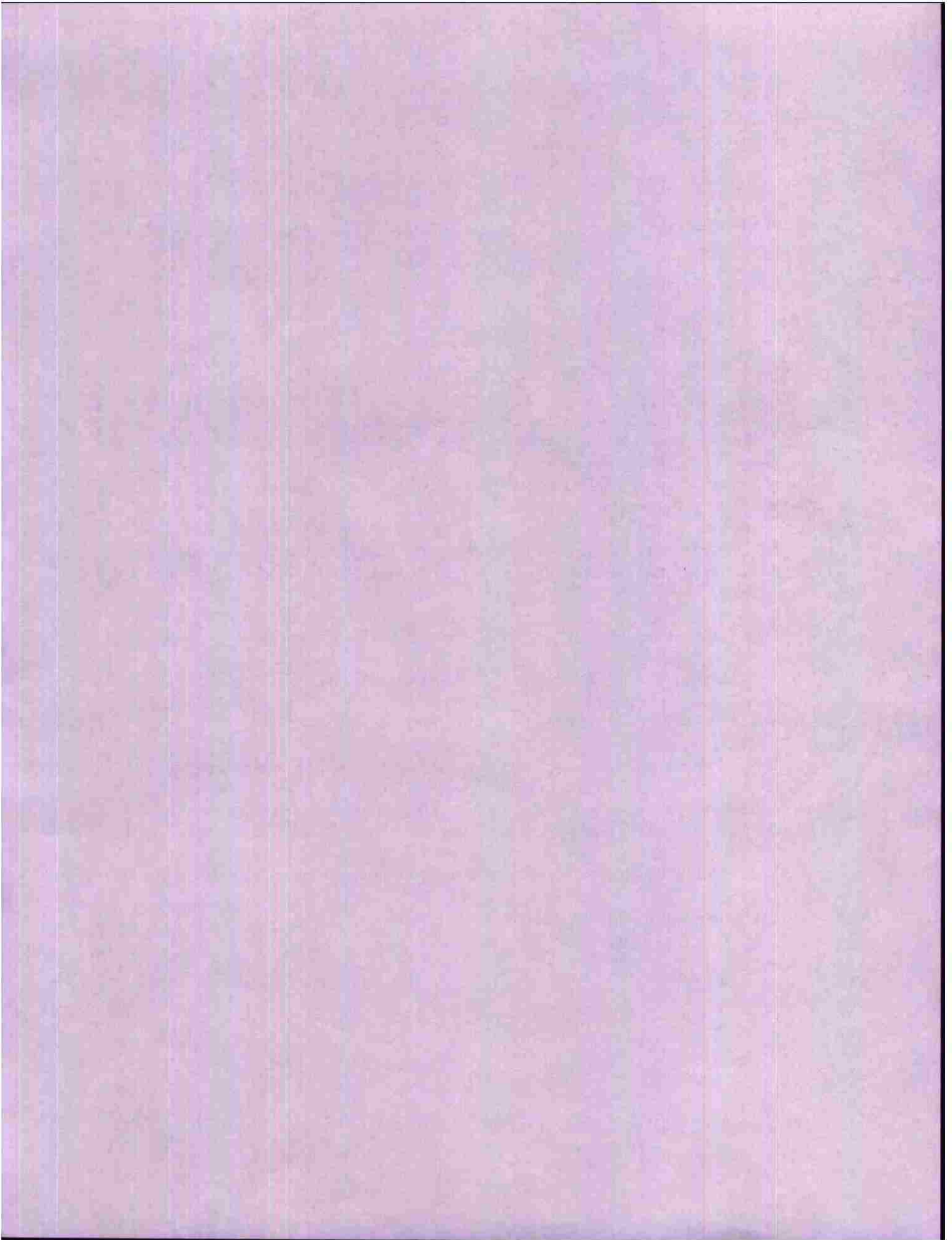
So far none of my wires & letters to Central Records office have given me any information. What I learned at Chaumont, was absolutely nothing. Chaumont could not ever locate the 24th Squadron there.

Xmas is over now. It wasn't Xmas to me. I could not enter into the spirit at all. If I could only do something, I feel like a starving man chained before a meal. You can not realize how congested things are. Why our whole regiment was lost from the Brigade for a week. They did not know where we were. But I should not leave France without knowing all.

Have two reports to hand in the morning to the C.O. about the motor equipment.

Lots of love to all. Your devoted son,

William



Febr 21

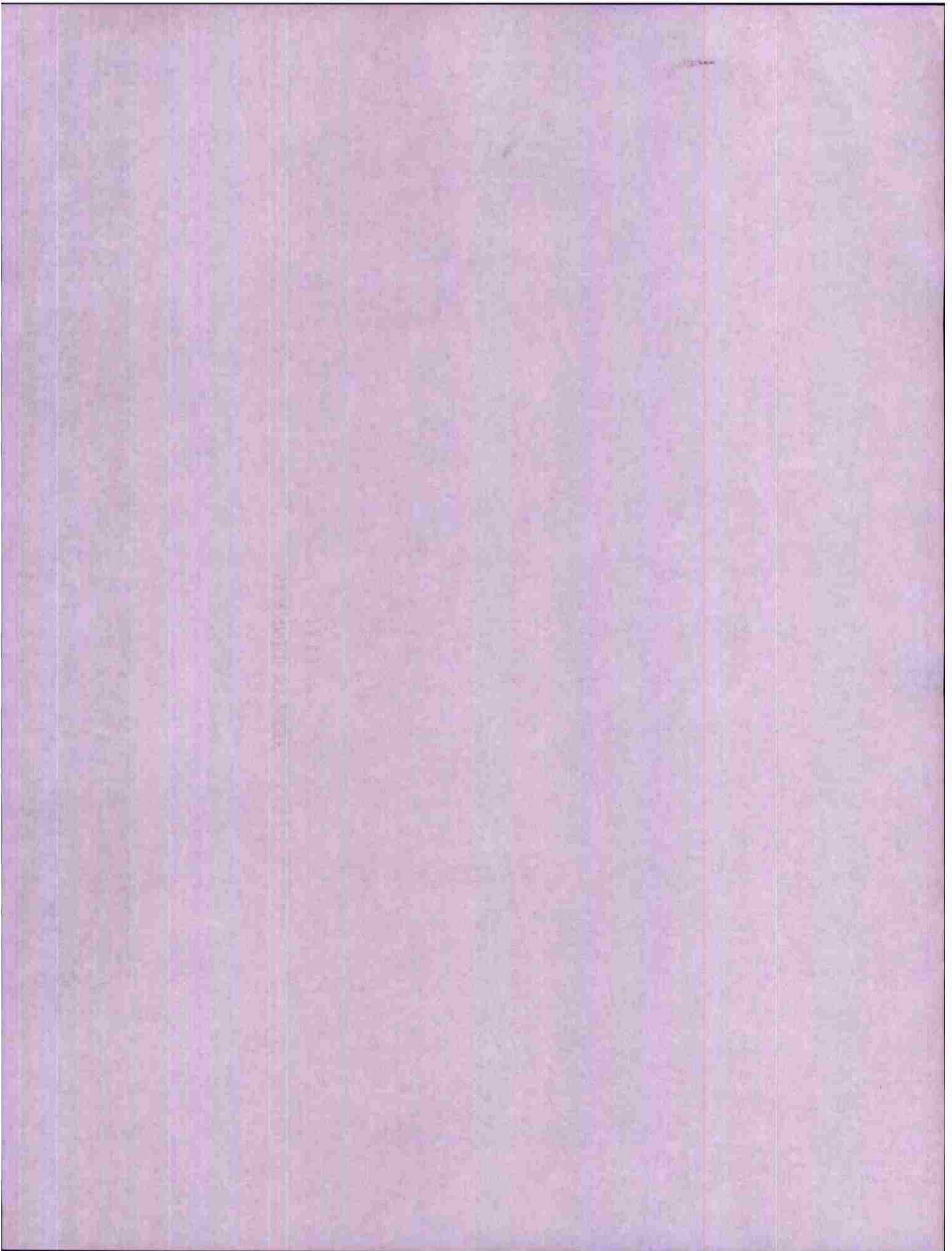
RETURN TO
AIR FORCE
Historical Research Agency
7300 APT. 6L 3512-6/24

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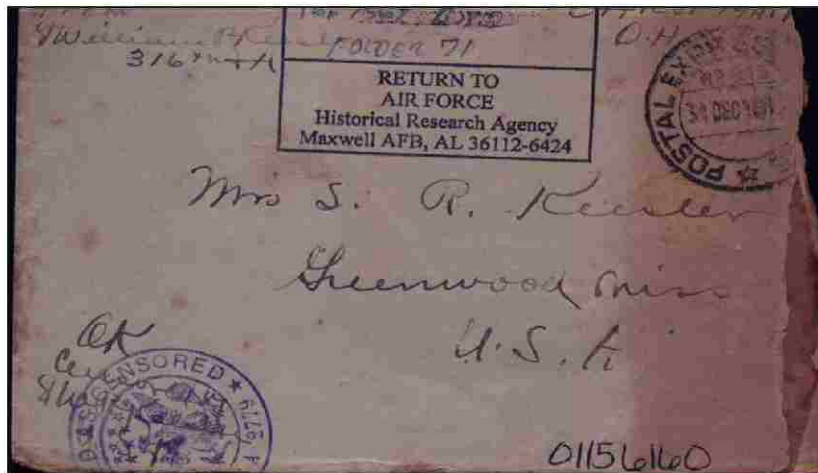
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mean we much. There
are several men here
who know Sam and they
all want some of and
told me how sorry they were.
At made me feel much
better. Jack Blake said "Bice
he was a piece of a fellow,"
and that is the best of them
all to me. Jack and me
helped to a distance the letter
I've gotten from the State too.
Chapman Currie was so good
to me, he helped very much
in many ways.
You had by now received
my letters written awhile
back and understand how
hard it is to leave any
thing here. (I) nothing to produce

St. John Francis
Dec 29 1918

Dearest Maureen,

All after noon I was
in a side - ear running
around the country doing my
best to find some bit of infor-
mation to write to you and
the family but I was awail.
Everything has been moved
from where it was yesterday
and ergore is so hard to
find. I could find no address
of Sam's pilot at existing Paris.
H.N.G. had nothing and you
saw the letter I got from the
Communicating Officer of the
14th. Everyone has been so
good to me and now is
the time when the friends

remove more than a year out. But what has it done for us? In the case of the St. Petersburg, I find it you speak of and all that peace in the world and yet we have a peace for us. Yet we have a peace has come to have too. What no peace on earth can equal, we must live on and on to the day when we shall all have the peace which is his world.

The Colonel was very much interested in my mission. He said that, a reputation here and there and expectations and when under his supervision. Tomorrow a 30 mile hike at full speed is scheduled. That meant that I had to see that every one had a spare cup was looked at by the dinner of the kitchen. In 10 go to-morrow. It will be my first try with the kitchen on the road. I must make good. When I return there is another job waiting, another report.

by a Frenchman in the middle of the night and not to underestimate him when he said just words were exciting. I don't owe to my 't. The whole way of the building was filled with noise. We were not sure if we made a hot fire. These houses here are not like those in Pasadena of Pasadena. There were first were. There the paper along with no other but a heavy one. The house is not on the ground floor. There is hardly any other. The I speak of here where at the other end, there were keen couples. We moved

Some auto photographer said "What a nice car auto make like, never's known when his job starts or ends." We were just pleased to do and think about. I don't regret we had lots of excitement or action though. I don't regret what I did. The dog got loose in the village burned down. It was an awful fire. The house was burned, nothing left except the walls. Everything was saved except a few big pieces of furniture. Major Manning and, Capt. Browne were riding in the house and they said that he

them at first but like good American
 it went for long.
 the biggest weight on the inside
 if we are now in coming home.
 no one knows anything however
 and the men who make the
 best minor in the one which
 discuss the biggest around him.
 in waiting to come home to you
 all may really now. There is more
 to do than now there was and
 in want to begin doing it.
 must stop now. After meeting
 and will love to get across the
 country. I am well.
 Your loving son
 William

OTC
 Edward A.
 Stoughton
 316 4th St

Postmarked 27 Dec, 1918
 Postal Express Service
 From Lt WP Keesler
 316th F.A.
 Officer's Mail
 O.A.S.
 To: Mrs. S.R. Keesler
 Greenwood, Miss
 U.S.A.

St. Blin France
 Dec 29, 1918

Dearest Mamma,

All afternoon I was in a side-car running around the country doing my best to find some bit of information to write to you and the family, but of no avail. Everything has been moved, from where it was yesterday and everyone in so hard to find. I could find no address of Sam's pilot excepting Paris. G.H.Q. had nothing and you saw the letter I got from the commanding officer of the 24th. Everyone has been so good to me and now is the time when true friends mean so much. There are several men here who know Sam and they all have come up and told me know sorry they were. It made me feel much better. Jack Black said "Bill he was a prince of a fellow." And that is the best of them all to me. Jack sure has helped a lot and the letters I've gotten from the States too. Chaplain Cursie was so good too, he had helped very much in many ways.

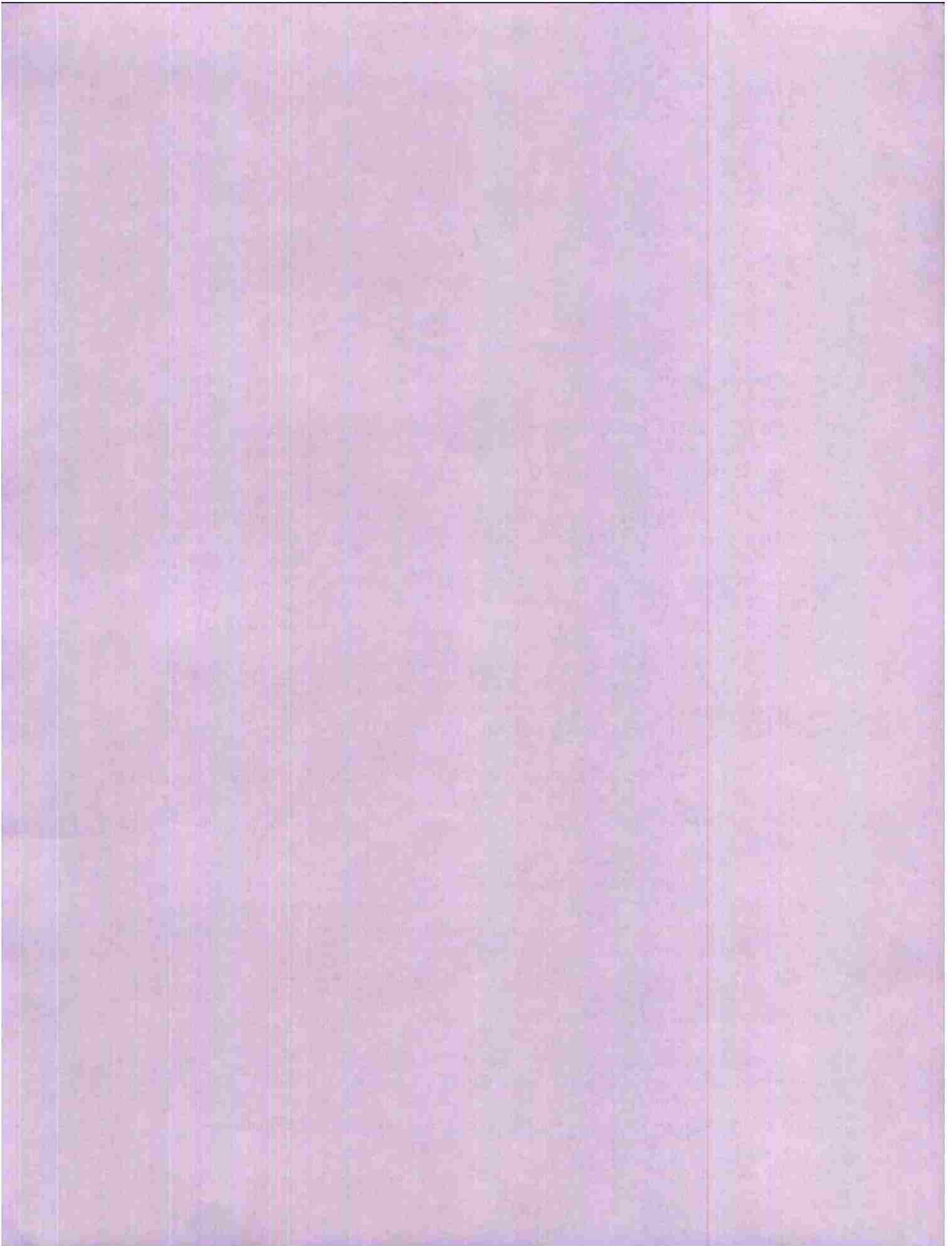
You have by now received my letters written awhile back and understand how hard it is to learn any thing here. Washington perhaps knows more than I can find out. But what there is I shall know. I'm tracking down thru Central Records office the address of Lt. Riley. When I find it you & father & I and all of us should know all.

How hard it is to realize that peace is here and yet no peace for us. Yet we know a peace has come to him too which no peace on earth can equal. We must live on and on to the day when we shall all have the peace which is his now.

The colonel has sure kept me going on my new job. Report on this and that, a requisition here and there and inspections and hikes under his supervision. Tomorrow a 20 mile hike at full speed is scheduled. That meant that I had to see that every oil hole & grease cups was looked at by the drivers of the batteries. I'm to go to-morrow. It will be my first trip with the batteries on the road. I must make good. When I return there is another job waiting, another report.

Some auto philosopher said "when a man an auto mans he never knows where his job starts or ends" He sure gets plenty to do and think about.

Last night we had lots of excitement or rather they had. I slept right straight thru it all. The largest house in the village burned down. It was an awful fire. The house was burned, nothing left except the walls. Everything was ashed excepting a few big pieces of furniture. Major Manning and Capt Browne were billeting in the house and they said "that to be by a



Frenchman in the middle of the night and not to understand him where he said fire was sure exciting. I don't care to try it. The whole upper story of the building was filled with nice dry stove wood and it sure made a hot fire. These houses here are not like those in Raldahon of Vanclaun where we first were. There the upper story was nothing but a house here the bark is put on the ground floor. There is hardly any cattle tho to speak of here where at the other town, there were beaucoup. We missed them at first but like good Americans it wasn't for long.

The biggest subjects on the minds of us al now is coming home. No one knows anything however and the man who makes the wildest rumor is the one which draws the biggest crowd around him. I'm wanting to come home to you all very badly now. There is more to do there now than here and I want to begin doing it.

Must stop now. Dear Mother, I send all love to you and all the family. I am well.

Your loving son,
William

