

Somewhere in France

January 2, 1945

Dear Haruo-nisan and Taka-chan,

Akemashite shinnen omedeto gozaimasu. Here's hoping that everyone is fine at home and starting the new year out right.

Out here we seem to have started the new year out right with a great big turkey. In as much as our kitchen in the rear could not furnish us with mocki, they sent up the next best thing by giving us turkey. It was much like the Christmas dinner with dressing and pineapple. We also had good American beer to go with the meal and I must admit that I had my share of it. It seems that every time I write a letter that I talk about food. But to tell you the truth, food, ~~and~~ sleep and letter writing ^{are} ~~to~~ about all we think of — that is, if the Germans do not bother us.

Wrote to Mito and Muts two days ago and to Noch a couple of days before that. Would have written Muts and Mito sooner

but I didn't know whether they were still on the farm or in camp.

Got paid two months' pay on the 31st of December and received 2840 francs. Though it sounds like a lot, it amounts to \$56.80 in U.S. money. Since coming overseas I found out that on top of getting the extra 20% for overseas pay, we are eligible for another \$10.00 more per month. This extra \$10.00 is called combat infantryman's pay and anyone who has seen front line duty is eligible for it. I have been getting my combat infantryman's pay since the 5th of Dec. so instead of getting \$15.00 per month, I'll be getting ~~\$25.00~~ \$25.00 per month.

Two of the boys are cooking corn beef and cabbages right now and it sure smells good. I guess it's just about time to eat so I'll close now but will write again when I have news.

Sayonara,
Hatchard