

Letter from Camp Jackson  
By Lieut. James S. Milliken, 27 Oct 1917

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#### Letter From Camp Jackson.

The following interesting letter was written to his parents near here by Lieut. Jas. S. Milliken, who is in the medical department at Camp Jackson, near Columbia, S. C. It was not intended for publication, but we are kindly permitted to favor our readers with it. It follows:

"Today, Oct. 27th, is as warm and pretty as any summer day. The earlier part of the week was cool enough for an overcoat. There was a cold northwest wind blowing. We live on the highest hill in the camp and our barracks face the north. My room has an eastern exposure and is a warm room. At first we did not have heat but they are just finishing the boiler just outside of my window and tonight we will have steam heat. There is running water with shower bath just across the hall from my room. Our mess is served in this same barracks. We get good meals but they cost us \$1 a day.

"Camp Jackson is named for Gen. Andrew Jackson and is located six miles northeast of Columbia. It is connected with Columbia by trolley. A public highway and the trunk lines that pass through Columbia have numerous freight lines running throughout the camp. There are hundreds of automobiles (they call them transfers here) running back and forth. The big majority of them are high priced seven-passenger cars. Very few Fords. These cars charge 50c per head and deliver you to any point in the camp. Round trip on the car line for soldiers is only 15c., but I live on the opposite side of the camp, and it is over three miles from here to the trolley, and on account of the recent dry spell the sand is from 6 to 10 inches deep. There are several roads and streets in my camp, but the best one is not complete yet. It is a concrete road. They have completed two miles of it but still lack one mile of reaching us; will possibly be up this far by Christmas. The

cantonment has not been graded. They do not dig any foundations for building. For instance, our barracks are on the side of a hill. The rear porch is level with the ground, and the front porch is nearly 20 feet above the ground. Now this highway that I referred to is graded and runs along the edge of the cantonment, and one has a pretty view of the numerous hills and ravines. The sides of the hills are covered with small pines, and where they do not interfere with the plans of the government they are left standing. For instance, drill grounds or for barracks they are cut down and the stumps removed. Most of this is done by drafted men. Leading off from this road are numerous other roads and streets. Roads are not engineered with any idea of system but for convenience. The streets are built like city streets and numbered alphabetically, beginning from A. I live on W, so you can see that it is 23 blocks from the base hospital to the opposite side of the camp, or an equal distance from home to Pittsboro. The barracks are numbered according to the street they are on—A 10. Different branches of the service are quartered separately. Our nearest neighbors outside of the base hospital unit are the 306th engineers.

"It is astonishing to see how rapidly these buildings go up. Carpenters left these barracks on Tuesday. Plumbers and electricians took charge, gave us light that night and running water the next night and we will get heat tonight. They have laid the foundation, put up a big boiler, laid pipe line and coupled up pipes in three days. When I came on Monday there were no buildings northwest of us, but today there are between 75 and 100 big buildings over there. They are putting on the roofs and weather boarding. Their hammers make one continuous racket all day long, never miss a moment. There are several thousand laborers at work here. All get big pay. Contractors get big pay for rushing the buildings. They have to be in a hurry for Camp Jackson has to accommodate 45,000 men this winter. Only between 15,000 and 20,000 here now.

"The next time I will write you about the hospital. This is a city within itself."