

## Postcards from LeRoy Cleaveland 1917-1923

The addressees are **Sadie** (his mother), **John** (his father), **Earl, Jerome** and **Ethel** (his younger siblings).

**3/5/1917** Place: To:

Dear Folks: We are having quite a bit of excitement about here nowadays. Several persons have been seen prowling around here lately and night before last two men got past the sentries at the main gate. The sentries shot at them but they got away in the dark. Two companies of guards pitched their tents around the radio station today and they have strict orders to shoot first and ask questions later if they see any prowlers. The guards are supplied with regular bullets that will kill so I don't think we will be troubled with prowlers unless it is to bury them.

*Description: Unposted, undated card, scene of Great Lakes Naval Training Station. Date based on content; his enlistment at Great Lakes and his immediate transfer to Buffalo.*

**5/10/1917** Place: **BUFFALO NY** To: **Earl**

Dear Earl: Got your letter and was sure glad to get it. So you are going to be a farmer for Uncle Sam, hey? Well if you work as hard as I used to when I was a kid Uncle Sam will get fat (fat chance). Write to me again soon. LeRoy

*Description: Picture of Niagara Falls.*

**5/10/1917** Place: **BUFFALO** To: **Jerome**

Dear Izzie: What are you going to do on the farm. Oh ya you can hitch up Champ and bring the stuff to the soldiers no not soldiers, sailors. Have you got the same dog and have I got any more brothers or sisters? .... .. Well gu om Say! Tell me all my friends that enlist will you? How many from school? LeRoy

*Description: Picture of Niagara Falls area. Note the ".... .." in the text is Morse code for "hi" which is amateur radio slang for a laugh. "om" is "old man." "gu" (pr perhaps "gn") is an unknown abbreviation. This is the only reference I know of to Jerome as "Izzie." "Champ" is the family dog.*

**7/30/1917** Place: **CAMBRIDGE MASS** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Got here all right. We have organized into different commands and I will be off next Sat. afternoon and Sun, If you stay will you phone me? LeRoy

*Description: Post card picture of U.S.S. Illinois.*

**8/3/1917** Place: **CAMBRIDGE MASS** To: **Sadie**

My dear Mother: I am coming to Nashua Sat. afternoon but I'll have to borrow some money some place. If you get this in time to send me a dollar then I wish you would. Let me know if you are going home. Lovingly, LeRoy.

*Description: Post card picture showing U.S.S. Iowa.*

**8/24/1917** Place: **CAMBRIDGE MASS** To: **Jerome**

Tell mama that I got her letter and will answer it soon. I saw Gordon Hamilton on the

USS Delaware about a week ago and he is still in Boston. He is the Commander's messenger. I met a couple of wireless fellows from Milwaukee that I know. A.J. Neumann - Bates knows him. Tell Bates if you see him. Lovingly, LeRoy

*Description: Picture of USS West Virginia at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.*

**9/12/1917 Place: CAMBRIDGE MASS To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: Haven't left yet but can't tell when I will. This is a picture of the building I used to be in but since there are so many here now this whole building is used for instruction and we live in different buildings. I will let you know my address as soon as I am transferred. LeRoy.

*Description: Pierce Hall, Engineering Department, Harvard university.*

**9/22/1917 Place: CAMBRIDGE MASS To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: I am leaving for someplace Monday at 1PM I will probably be sent to commonwealth pier Boston to wait for assignment. Will let you know as soon as I get someplace. Got your card yesterday. Might send a telegram so don't get scared. LeRoy

*Description: "U.S.S. Castine at anchor. Pensacola, Fla."*

**9/29/1917 Place: PORTSMOUTH VA To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: Arrived here Thursday but couldn't write. The ship is under repair and I can't find anyplace to write. We expect to go to sea soon. We have coaled up and are taking 12" and 5" ammunition aboard now. My address now is USS Utah Radio c/o Postmaster NY. Send me Henry's new address when you write. Will write a long letter as soon as I can. With love, LeRoy

*Description: Photo of USS Utah.*

**10/5/1917 Place: NORFOLK VA To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: I haven't got a bit of mail yet but I suppose you want some from me just the same. Maybe you had my address wrong. You had better add this under my name: Electrician 2C Radio. USS Utah Box E c/o Postmaster New York City.

*Description: Photo of USS Utah.*

**10/8/1917 Place: NORFOLK VA To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: Got your letters yesterday. When I spoke of women's advice I meant Aunt Myra's not you. She sits and talks all day and Uncle Dan is worse. Did you get my letter and other card? This is a picture of the Florida's after-deck. She is the sister ship of the Utah so they look the same. Of course the ship is being repaired in this picture. LeRoy

*Description: Post card photo of "Three rear turrets and 14 inch guns of U.S. Battleship Florida."*

**10/9/1917 Place: NORFOLK VA To: Jerome**

Dear Brother: I was on the ship on the left of this picture one day. The Utah is tied up right across the river from it. Maybe this picture was taken from the Utah. LeRoy.

*Description: "Training ships, St. Helena Training station, Berkley, VA."*

**10/18/1917 Place: NORFOLK, VA To: Earl**

Dear Brother: See this picture? Well I think our ship will be there in a few days. I am

going to the Baptist church here tonight with some other fellows. It is quarter to eight now and I got to hurry. I am at the Navy YMCA. LeRoy

*Description: Scene of U.S Battleship fleet, Hampton Roads, Old Point Comfort, Virginia.*

**11/13/1917 Place: NEW YORK N.Y. To: John**

Dear Dad: I'll probably be home when you get this but had to find something to do so I am sending post cards. Would visit Lester if I had time but only have four hours. Am seeing the burg. LeRoy

*Description: Curb market, Broad street, New York [Note that LeRoy had leave from the Battleship Utah from November 12 to 23 of 1917]*

**11/26/1917 Place: NORFOLK VA To: Earl**

Dear Brother: How would you like to have one of these guns go off while you were sitting on it? There are two guns there but it looks like one. LeRoy

*Description: One of the big guns aboard a U.S. Battleship*

**11/26/1917 Place: NORFOLK VA To: Ethel**

Dear Sis: Tell mama that I received news of that explosion there by wireless about an hour after it happened. LeRoy

*Description: Picture of waterfront Portsmouth Navy Yard, Norfolk. Postmark is dated Nov. 26th, year missing but deduced from similar card mailed same date.*

**12/1/1917 Place: NORFOLK, VA To: Sadie**

Dear Mother: I mailed a letter today but forgot to save out my picture. Will you please send the film of my picture to the drug store and have about six prints made and send them to me. LeRoy

*Description: Picture of Granby Street, Norfolk*

**12/5/1917 Place: ATLANTA GA To: Ethel**

Dear Sis: Could not get any shark's teeth but am sending something I got off the train and got in the country in Hoffman N.C. Have to stay over here till tomorrow. Atlanta, Ga.  
Your Brother, Leroy [sic]

*Description: "Birds Eye View of Business Center of Atlanta, Ga.*

**12/6/1917 Place: ATLANTA GA To: Jerome**

Dear Jerome: Am having a fine time here. I leave for New Orleans this morning. LeRoy

*Description: Photo of Peachtree Street*

**12/6/1917 Place: ATLANTA GA To: Sadie**

Dear Mother, Hope I will like the USS Petrel. It is a Spanish ship that we captured in the Spanish American War. Love, LeRoy.

*Description: "Stone Mountain. Largest Solid Stone in the World. One mile from Base to Summit. 16 miles from Atlanta, Ga."*

**12/9/1917 Place: NEW ORLEANS To: Ethel**

Dear Sis: Did you get that cotton I sent you? This is the kind of music we have wouldn't you like to hear it? It is a little warmer here than at Norfolk. Your loving brother LeRoy

*Description: Picture of "Alligator chorus down in Louisiana"*

**12/10/1917** Place: **NEW ORLEANS** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Got here a couple of nights ago but couldn't get ashore to write. Please mail me about ten dollars so I can get a couple teeth fixed. I want to have them fixed the best possible. The Navy doctor hasn't had much experience. Address me this way and I'll get it sooner. L.A. Cleave. General Delivery New Orleans, La.

*Description: Picture of Charles Street, New Orleans*

**12/25/1917** Place: **NEW ORLEANS** To: **John**

Dear Dad: I've got the hunting fever again and I guess I'll have to go out and get some ducks or a couple deer. This is a great place for game. You are allowed two deer a day. They shoot a lot of them about five miles from here. The season is open from 1st Oct. to Jan 20. Your salty son, LeRoy

*Description: Picture of lake Ponchartrain*

**1/14/1918** Place: **NEW ORLEANS** To: **Sadie**

Dear folks: I am writing this in the Army and Navy Club. Stayed overnight at the St. Charles Hotel last night Best hotel in New Orleans Had room with bath for three bones. I stayed in the tub nearly all afternoon. It was the first real bath I had since I was home on the furlough. My! But the bed felt soft. I could hardly get to sleep, Ha Ha. LeRoy

*Description: "Flotilla of Destroyers on way to sea."*

**1/14/1918** Place: **NEW ORLEANS** To: **Earl**

Dear Brother: The Petrel is a gunboat that is smaller than the Tuscarora and just got back from Cuba where she was for two years. We will be here for about a month or more. Your loving brother, LeRoy.

*Description: Photo of alligator wrestling: "Capturing an inhabitant of the marshes near Lake Pontchartrain, La."*

**1/26/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA** To: **Jerome**

Brother.

*Description: Cleaning sponges, Key West, Fla.*

**1/26/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: This is some place. About like Reed City only it is more foreign. A lot of Spaniards and Cubans here. Will write as soon as I can find time. Lovingly, LeRoy.

*Description: Picture of DuVal street, Key West.*

**2/4/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA** To: **Earl**

Dear Brother: How fast can you receive on the wireless now? I am going out in the woods and pick some oranges and pineapples now. Goodbye, LeRoy.

*Description: Sunset on South Beach, Key West, Fla.*

**2/10/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FL** To: **Sadie**

Dear Folks: That letter you wrote to the postmaster at N.Y. was forwarded to our ship and they showed it to me. The Postmaster at N.Y. said it should be attended to by the ship.

With Love, LeRoy.

*Description: Scene of milk cows on street in key West*

**2/22/1918** Place: **[Not posted]** To:  
USS Petrel "dressed up" Washington's birthday.

*Description: Post card photograph of USS Petrel. Year deduced from LeRoy's service dates.*

**2/28/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA.** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: I have received a couple letters from you since I wrote last but we have been out to sea so much I couldn't write. Am feeling fine but awful lazy in this hot weather. Lovingly, LeRoy

*Description: Photo of a palm-studded shoreline*

**3/4/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA.** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Last letter I received from you today dated Feb. 18. Am getting mail OK now. Will not be able to write for at least a week from today so don't be worried. Address c/o Postmaster New York. Lovingly, LeRoy.

*Description: Picture of a palm tree in Florida.*

**3/4/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA** To: **Earl**

Dear Brother: How is this for a snake, eh? Shall I send you one? Gee I'm hot ain't you? I am all tanned up. Your loving brother, LeRoy.

*Description: Picture of a Florida Rattlesnake.*

**3/22/1918** Place: **SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO** To: **Earl**

Dear Brother: How would you like to have this kid's job, hey? Nice and warm here. Can pick bananas and oranges off the trees. LeRoy.

*Description: Picture showing boy on mule-back carrying bags of milk to market.*

**3/23/1918** Place: **SAN JUAN P.R.** To: **Sadie**

Mar. 23. Was out climbing some of these little hills today and picking coconuts. This is a pretty place down here. Lovingly, LeRoy.

*Description: Las Dos Bocas, Arecibo, P.R. [year of postmark deduced from similar card]*

**4/6/1918** Place: **??? WHARF VA** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Don't send that pass as I won't be able to get a furlough. Will not get our mail for a week or so, as it is at Key West. Will write again soon, Lovingly, your son, LeRoy

*Description: Picture of ferry slips in Norfolk, VA looking towards Portsmouth*

**4/15/1918** Place: **CHARLESTON SC** To: **John**

Dear Folks: Received answer to my telegram this A.M. Sorry I can't get pass but I expect to get transferred soon and may get nearer to New York then. Have not received our mail from Key West yet but will soon. With love, LeRoy

*Description: Picture of Fort Sumpter.*

**6/29/1918** Place: **KEY WEST FLA** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Am being sent back to the Petrel in Tampico Mexico on SS Tallac[?]. Will write as soon as possible, My address is Petrel again. Will receive no mail until I get to Mexico. With Love LeRoy. Rec'd money O.K.

*Description: Tropical Garden, Key West, Fla.*

**7/14/1918** Place: [Unreadable] To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Have received no mail yet but hope to in a couple of days. Will probably be here for several months unless transferred Take Quinine every day. With Love LeRoy

*Description: Post card picture of Tampico, Mexico.*

**7/22/1918** Place: [Unreadable] To: **Jerome**

Dear Brother: This is the Mexican warship "Bravo." Have not received any mail yet but hope to soon. Am getting along alright. Love, LeRoy.

*Description: Post card picture of Tampico, Mexico. Dated by annotation.*

**7/25/1918** Place: **U.S. NAVY** To: **Earl**

*Description: Card dated ??? 25, 1918 showing scene of Puebla, Mexico. CENSORED, U.S.NAVY Month deduced from other cards*

**7/25/1918** Place: **U.S. NAVY** To: **Jerome**

Dear Brother: Please send me Henry Bressler's address and also E. Nelson's and Oscar Hanson's and Ed Naylor's. Am feeling well but awful tired. Got four hours sleep last night and two the night before. It rains nearly every night. Your loving brother, LeRoy. U.S.S. Petrel

*Description: CENSORED U.S. NAVY. Dated ??? 25 1918. Picture shows a scene in Tampico, Mexico. Month deduced from other cards*

**9/1/1918** Place: **U.S. Navy** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Wrote a letter to Gertrude Hill today but I hadn't received her letter. Answered a long letter from Uncle Cary too, Feeling well. Your loving son, LeRoy. U.S.S. Petrel.

*Description: Picture of bull fight in Mexico City. Year deduced from service record (USS Petrel).*

**2/2/1919** Place: **US NAVAL BASE BERMUDA** To: **Sadie**

L. A. Cleaveland, U.S.N.R.F Sara Thompson. Dear Mother: Came to this place while bicycle riding and was invited in by a fine old American and was treated fine. He had a big American flag and a sign "U.S. Sailors Welcome" over the gate. He lives there all alone with a little dog he brought from the U.S. with him. Love to all, LeRoy. Leaving this A.M.

*Description: Dated Feb 2, ????. Deduced 1919 based on ship name and his record. Picture of "Residence of (unreadable) of New York."*

**2/22/1919** Place: **BERMUDA** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Expect to tomorrow morning [sic] but I don't know where we are going to go. We may be back here in a few days. With Love, LeRoy.

*Description: Scene of Mullet Bay, Bermuda*

**2/22/1919** Place: **BERMUDA** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Out picking bananas and riding bicycle. No motor bus allowed here. No street cars or anything. All quiet. With Love, LeRoy.

*Description: Scene of Bermuda.*

**3/1/1919** Place: **[none] - Sailor's mail** To: **Sadie**

L.A. Cleaveland U.S.N.R.F. U.S.S. Sara Thompson. Dear Mother: This is a pretty good place but I am afraid we will be here too long to suit me. Had a good time ashore yesterday. Received your letter and box of candy yesterday. Your loving son LeRoy.

*Description: Portugal - [a woodland scene] No postmark - sailor's mail. Date deduced from ship/place; could be any time from mid-Feb to March 31 when he was aboard the Newburgh.*

**3/11/1919** Place: **U.S.S. TONOPAH** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Just finished a letter to you so have no more to say. Don't have to buy stamps over here so I will send you a few cards. LeRoy.

*Description: Dated March 11, ??? U.S. Naval Forces Europe. [Picture on the card is of a scene in the Azores] Year based on other correspondence from Europe.*

**5/15/1919** Place: **ROTTERDAM** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: I am writing pretty bum and couldn't write before because my third finger is smashed and in a bandage. An iron door slammed on it in rough weather. It will be alright soon though. With love, LeRoy.

*Description: Scene of Rotterdam*

**5/15/1919** Place: **ROTTERDAM** To: **Jerome**

Dear Brother: We came in here Monday morning and it is now Thursday we will leave about Sunday. This is a picture of the fish market (zeevitchmarkt). Am having a good time. LeRoy.

*Description: Rotterdam Zeevischmarkt*

**9/3/1920** Place: **BOSTON, MASS** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Received the check O.K. Stopped here overnight Going to N.Y. this A.M. Don't let anyone monkey with the motorcycle or Evinrude till I get there. Especially Ed Nelson. Roy

*Description: The Argone hotel, Pemberton and Bulfinch Street, Boston, Mass.*

**1/9/1921** Place: **ALBUQ. & ASHFORD RPO** To: **John**

Stopped at Las Vegas half hour for supper. One hour late so far. Roy.

*Description: Apache canyon in the Glorieta mountains, New Mex. Postmarked Jan 9th, no year. Year deduced from location and another card mailed on a RR.*

**1/9/1921** Place: **ALBUQ. & ASHFORD R.P.O** To: **Ethel**

Birthday greetings. Some Indian house, ain't it? Roy.

*Description: Picture of kids on a ladder in a Hopi village, New Mexico. Postmarked Jan 9th, no year. Year*

*deduced from location and another card mailed on a RR.*

**1/9/1921** Place: **DODGE AND TRINIDAD R.P.O.** To: **Ethel**

Stopped at La Junta for dinner. Brother.

*Description: Volcanic cone and lava beds, New Mex.*

**1/9/1921** Place: **ALBUQ. & ASHFORD R.P.O** To: **Earl**

Stopped at Trinidad [Colorado] for a while. Roy

*Description: Birds's eye view of Trinidad, Colo. Postmark Jan 9th, no year. Year deduced from location and another card mailed on a RR.*

**1/18/1921** Place: **KANSAS CITY** To: **Sadie**

Best Regards. All O.K. so far. LeRoy

*Description: Picture of Cliff drive, Kansas City, Mo.*

**7/8/1923** Place: **LIVINGSTON MONT** To: **Earl**

Dear Earl: Fixed a fellow's Buick yesterday on the road and got \$5.00 for about half an hour. How is that? Some cowboys out here. Arrived at Livingston,. Mont. Last night.

Going to Butte now. Roy.

*Description: Picture of a rodeo.*

**7/10/1923** Place: **MISSOULA MONT.** To: **Jerome**

Dear Jerome: Not so many mosquitoes out here to bother you. Fine camping near the mountain streams. Big trout. Was up 9000 feet yesterday near Butte and got so cold my nose about froze. Roy.

*Description: Picture of Castle Rock, Montana Bad Lands.*

**7/10/1923** Place: **MISSOULA MONT.** To: **Sadie**

Dear Mother: Arrived at Missoula today. Going to Wallace Idaho tomorrow. This stretch is the rottenest one in the bunch. 144 miles of rotten road to Wallace then to Spokane, Wash. Love, Roy

*Description: Picture of train on a RR bridge "Traveling through the Mountains of the Northwest"*