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Letters From Malheur County Boys Who Served 'Over There'

The following letter was received by Mrs. A. K. Johnson a week or so ago from her brother Pvt. C. T. Johnson who is with the 23rd Engineers in France:

Aunbreville, France.

This letter leaves me fine and dandy. I do not know how long I will be here; a fellow cannot tell what the army will do, we may move in a few days and then again it may be months. So you see we just have to wait patiently. We are all anxious to get home. The people need not worry about their boys staying in France after they are discharged. All I have met are very anxious to get home. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to live thru this war are going to be real patriotic men. This army life in a foreign country sure makes a man long for the home land. After I am settled again you won't see me once a year and that will be just going to the county fair.

I expect in a few days to go on my furlough to Nice, a leave area for the soldier boys. It will be a long cold ride some of the way, we will ride in box cars. At Nice it is warm and I expect to have a good time there. I have a friend who is going with me. He is a good man we can look after each other. I expect to see Gordon Shaffer while on this trip. I have had several letters from him. He is with the 21st Engineers and isn't far from here. I haven't met a person from home I know. I get kind of lonesome to see a familiar face again. It is funny to hear the boys here. You will see a fellow open his letter from his girl and then start to swearing and then laughing. They have probably sent them a few hundred francs of old lace or some other French souvenir and then their girl has married a slacker. One of our friends received an invitation to his girl's wedding. It is happening pretty regular over here. Think of it, I haven't spoken over a dozen words to an English speaking woman in over a year.

We have been on fronts where there was no Y. M. C. A.'s to speak of, only a few run by men. The Red Cross is the greatest of them all and a wonderful organization. They have helped the fellow who needed it the most.

Well, I must close for to day. Trusting this letter will reach you and that it will find you all well, I ab.

Your soldier brother in Khaki.
Pvt. Thos. C. Johnson.

From Germany comes the letter which Emmet Johnson wrote to his parents on learning of his brother's death in the great drive:

Hendelshern, Germany, Dec. 12

Dear folks at home:

I will write you a few lines together this time as I haven't much writing paper. I received your letter a couple of days ago telling of Elbert's death. I hated to hear it so bad. I was so in hopes that we could come back home together. I am away over here in Germany and have no chance of finding anything out about it. I do not even know what front he was on. I am more anxious to get back now.

We have been on the march since the 20th of November, stopping only a few days to rest a couple of times. We are at rest now for a couple of days or so. We went thru Alsace-Lorraine, Luxemburg and are now well into Germany. Will soon reach our destination. The 40th Division undoubtedly was broken up and put

into a replacement camp to fill out those that had been in the lines. That is the way they have been doing. Well, I guess that we will have to stand it as best we can. I want to go back with you as soon as I can for I know that you need me now.

I spoke to the captain yesterday about going home right away and he said that he could get me transferred to an S. O. S. Camp (Service of Supply) and I would catch a boat and go back sooner. He said that he would take it up with the commanding officer and get me a quicker route than that. He said he thought that I had done my part over here and he would do all he could. Captain Fuller is his name and he came across with the company and was gassed and was away for a while.

I expect we will all be back by spring anyway but it seems a long time to stay away. You wanted to know if I needed any money. I drew my last pay in June. That leaves me six week's pay coming counting this month. I have had plenty of money all the time and still have a little left. I do not care if I get paid now until I get in the States and then I will draw U. S. money again. The reason I didn't get my pay when I got back was because I couldn't sign the payroll until the books were straightened out. It seems they dropped my name from the roster.

I will have to close now.
Goodbye and answer soon.

Your son,
EMMETT JOHNSON

Adenau, Germany, Dec. 26.

Dear Mother:

Everything is coming along all right over here in Germany but I cannot tell how soon it will be before the 4th Division returns home as no one knows. It was one of the picked divisions in France to go on this expedition in to Germany to do guard duty. And it is considered an honor to be able to come over here. We left a little town called Vertursey in France on November 20th, and reached this place in about 24 days. I should judge we marched about 250 miles or more. We came thru Assace-Lorraine, Luxemburg, and on into Germany coming down the Moselle River. I think he will go from here to Coblenz unless orders are changed. Captain Fuller has gone back to France to go to school for a while and then he expects to return to Company L if we were still here. He put in a recommendation for me to come home but it was revoked at headquarters until further orders as no soldiers are being discharged in the A. E. F., only in the states.

There is quite a bit of talk of us being on the list bound for home by the fifteenth of January and we may if we get relieved. When peace is signed and not before, tho. There are two or three divisions ahead of us and several following up behind. We all belong to what is known as The Army of Occupation.

Some days on the march as far as forty kilometers. After a long days hike with full packs on our backs a few of the men had to fall out and were sent back to S. O. S. camps in France.

Well, we had a pretty good Christmas here. There is a large recreation hall and a Y. M. C. A. coming. There is a Red Cross room here now with several Red Cross girls. They serve sandwiches to the soldiers now of evenings and everything is free of charge. We are billeted in all the

German houses in spare rooms and have lights, chairs and fires all furnished.

The cooks made some candy any they cooked a good supper and we all ate together in the basement of a church on Christmas night. Then after supper we all went to the recreation hall and had a band concert, a program and services by the chaplain. It snowed about two inches so it was a real American Christmas, over across the seas.

We landed in Brest on the 23rd of May, stopping there about four days. Then we entrained there for the British front, staying there for about 10 days, and our orders were changed and we went back to the Soissons and Chateau Thierry fronts. It was there we first went into the lines on July 18 when the big offensive started.

I have not been able to learn anything about Elbert but I know that he was in the big drive that started about September 25. Well, do not be surprised if I come home in a month or two. I hope to be back by the first of February, anyway.

Goodbye, EMMETT

CLIFF CANFIELD TELLS OF HOPES FOR HOMECOMING

In letters written his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ward Canfield and his brother Lieut. Fred Canfield, Clifford Canfield who is with the famous Lafayette Squadron tells of the desire of the men of the A. E. F. to get home again. His letters follow:

Erres, France, January 1
A merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of the family. We are eating our traveling rations lately and have not had a very good Christmas and New Year's dinner. We got some cocoa and sugar from the Red Cross last night and made some fudge candy. We ate it all last night so that the rats would not get any and as a result most of the boys are sick today.

We turned in our aeroplanes a few weeks ago and have been drilling lately. Everything looks as if we might get orders to go home before long. Some of the boys have been reduced from the ranks to go home so you need not be surprised if I come home the same way.

Am sending you a couple of snap shots taken just after the armistice was signed. I had charge of the plane. I received it about the first of September. It is a Spad monoplane with a 220 H. P. Hispano Suiza motor. My pilot got a German plane with it during the Argonne drive.

How is the winter at home this year? It has been raining here every day or so since September. We had a little snow Christmas Eve. We have not had a real cold day yet but think it will come soon.

Your son,
SGT. CLIFFORD CANFIELD
102 Aero Sqdn., Lafayette Escadrille.

Dear Brother Fred:
I received your letter yesterday, and was very glad to get it. We are just hanging around here at present waiting for orders to go home. The prospects look good, too.

They gave all of us crew chiefs an examination the other day for A. M. The exam was pretty easy and I made a rather good grade in it. So I am now an A. M. I spent four months in Paris on Hispano Suiza motors and then went to Issadoun for a month and then came to the front in February. We took over the Lafayette Escadrille from the French. Our squadron was attached to the French army until July. We were in Fismes for about a month and left just before the big drive for Paris. Then we went around Dunkerque and the English Channel until July and then we came down and joined the American army at Toul.

We had the 180 Hispanos first but since the summer we have had the

220 H. P. H. S. in the Spad monoplane. We have been as near as 10 miles from the front with our field filld and as far back as 40, so the only danger we were in was from the dropping of bombs and there sure was gobs of them up North.

We have been in the Third Pursuit Group since last August. There are four aero squadrons and one para squadron in a Group. Lieut. Col. Thaw was in command of the Group but since the armistice was signed he has left.

I am afraid they will keep in the army until my time is up, since I signed up for the full enlistment, but then, it won't be so tough if I can hold my rank with A. M.

CLIFF

RUFUS DINWIDDIE TELLS OF FIGHTING IN FRANCE

Will R. King who was in Ontario last week sent the Argus the following

interesting letter written by Rufus Dinwiddie, of Jordan Valley who is well known in Ontario since he attended the Ontario schools several years ago.

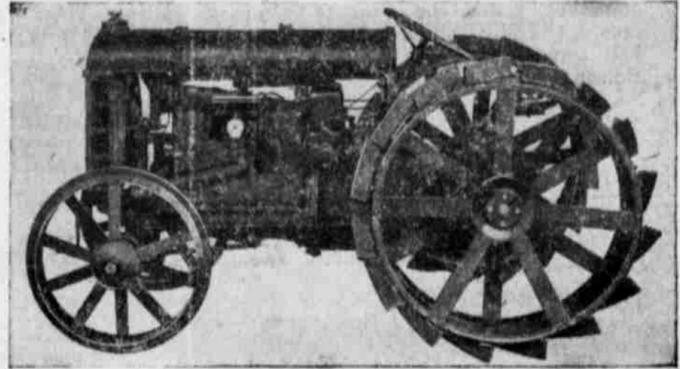
"This being 'fathers' day' here in France, I will take this opportunity of writing. The censor has 'eased up', too, so I can tell where all we've been. That is a lengthy article in itself.

"To start with, we sailed from Hoboken, N. J., January 31 1918 by way of Halifax, where we were three days on the boat—this was just after the explosion—landed in Liverpool, England, February 16; same day took a train. You can imagine a dinkey English train, for Ramsey, where we were from February 17 to March 2. We were then scheduled for France. We went by way of Southampton to Falkstone, a famous summer resort, and took the boat across the English channel to Bologne, France. Arrived about 6 bells March 3, 1918; stayed

overnight and next day continued on our journey to Dunkirk, the town of 'horrible nights', March 4, 1918, on the Flanders front. The squadron split into fights, and we were sent to join the fifth R. N. A. S., then on the St. Quintin front, March 10, 1918, in 'B' flight, via Bologne, Calais, Aplin Court to Perronne, March 12, by way of truck to Mons.

"Everything was lonely here with the fifth R. N. A. S. until unexpectedly one afternoon, March 21, Fritz started his big drive and was coming from St. Quintin, miles per hour! We were in another 'famous retreat from Mons', the next stop being Roye, between Aimeins and St. Quentin, and there we lasted about four days, and forced to retire again, March 26 1918 arriving at Bertangle, five miles from Aimeins, that night, two miles or less,

(Continued on Page 8)



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