

# TED RICE WRITES TO THE HOME FOLKS

GIVES INTERESTING NEWS OF HIS WORK AT FRONT

## WAS IN THE BIG MARNE PUSH

Tells of Hun Retreat And Capture Of Thousands Of German Prisoners. Has Many Souvenirs

Following are the letters written to the parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Rice:

"Aug. 27, 1918. "In France at last! How queer it seems to be thus transferred to another continent! Especially to one—meaning little me—whose habits have been hardly nomadic, to say the least. The queerness, however, is entirely eclipsed by another emotion, that of thankfulness and happiness. I have reached at last what has for so long been my goal. At last I shall have a chance to throw my little might into this terrific and glorious struggle for right, truth and humanity.

But perhaps I had better begin at the beginning. We stayed over in 'Philly' for a week, for the express purpose, I verily believe, of being able to leave on the 13th, the lucky number. You see Colonel Butler had charge of the Regiment until it broke up at Quantico, and it was a hobby of his, this 13 business. He tried to arrange everything so as to involve that number as often as possible in the regimental affairs, and although he is no longer in charge of this regiment, and the regiment is no longer the 13th, still his successors seem to have caught or honored that whim of his. We left on the 13th and it took 13 days to make the journey. We are all, it seems, catching the infection, and feel that this regiment is going to hit Germany a terrific blow.

It was a small fleet of transports and destroyers and aeroplanes that left (censored). A large number of soldier transports came along as well as the marine transports. Our letters will be severely censored, so I cannot be explicit, I suppose, as to our exact strength. I was a submarine lookout, and one hour of each night, served my turn in sweeping the sea with powerful glasses from an exalted perch. It was exciting work, for at any moment a periscope might show itself and a torpedo come hurtling through the water and upon me and my fellow lookouts depended the safety of the entire expedition. Our gun crews stood by the guns night and day, by reliefs and as soon as a lookout through his speaking tube communicated to the bridge officer any object, seaward, wreckage, etc., (for Germans are clever and use many innocent looking objects to conceal themselves) trained their guns upon the object until it was closely investigated and found harmless.

I was the first man on our boat to lay eyes on land, and on France. As my cry of "Land Ho" reverberated through the ship a huge cry arose and a near stampede occurred to obtain advantageous positions. Cheer after cheer arose, our chaplain prayed fervently amidst dead silence and our higher officers delivered stirring addresses. The boys were mad with enthusiasm. Oh, it certainly bodes ill for Germany, that spirit.

As we landed the French extended an enthusiastic welcome. It was a proud moment for me as we marched in perfect order to our quarters. Today has been spent in a curious survey of the French, their customs, language, manners, money, etc. We have not yet secured liberty. I expect to learn a lot on my first liberty. We expect to be transported by box cars to the training area. We have received no mail since leaving Quantico, about three weeks ago, and certainly are anxious to get some. I will close now as there is much to be done and I want this to reach you at the earliest possible moment, as you are anxious undoubtedly. I am radiantly well and happy. Your loving son, TED."

September 17, 1918

Well I have been through the "baptism of fire," the "test by fire," and hell besides. A hell not expressed in terms of bursting shell and glittering bayonet, but a hell of hunger and thirst, and forced marches up and down hill, through mud ankle deep; marching by night and fighting by day, with almost no sleep, and that little in mud and intense cold, without blankets or shelter from the incessant rain. Yet I am well and happy as usual. Moreover, I have acquired Hun souvenirs that the girls at home in the States will be anxious to see and hear about.

We got back from the trenches last night, expecting at least a week's rest—and believe me, we certainly need it, as you will agree with me after I relate my experiences—but the rumor is rapidly gaining credence that our division is to return again at once to the front line.

Well, I will start at the beginning. I told you I would not withhold anything from you, and I won't. After the letter I wrote you from Brest (did you receive it?) we were sent up to the rest camp and had things pretty easy for a few days. We then boarded box cars, little French affairs, packed like sardines, 40 men to a car. After a fearful madhouse of two days and nights without sleep, we landed at a pretty little village, where we were billeted. We had fine quarters, and fine treatment from the natives. They forced wine on all the boys who drank.

With my little dictionary and my quart canteen I sallied forth the first night in quest of "milk" (milk) and "pain" (bread). I stopped at a little farm cottage on the outskirts, and conversed smilingly and not so laboriously as you might imagine, with the shy but delighted inhabitants. There was an old, toothless lady, grandmothers, her son, about 60, his wife, about 50, with an 18-day old baby, their sons,

17 and 10, and their daughter, a beautiful red cheeked girl of 16. I was broke, but had brought along various articles of apparel which I tried unsuccessfully to induce them to accept as a return for the lavish hospitality they for four days showered upon me. Milk, both goat and cow, butter, cheese, confiture, (jam), stew, syrup, grapes, raisins, blackberries, etc., etc. It was only upon my leaving and my explaining that I could not take certain articles with me to the front, that they at last accepted them. When I left they kissed me, all of them, and seemed very sorry to see me go. The name of the family was Mobaire-Robert (pronounced Robaire) Georges, Jhan, and Pierre, the names of the children.

We boarded box cars again. Americans, this time, 60 men to a car, and after a madhouse of two days and nights, worse than before, we landed at dusk at a certain point, marched through the mud with our 60-pound packs until dawn. I will not expiate on that terrible night now, because it has been so often eclipsed since then, but you can imagine. The next day they split us up among veteran companies at the marine camp. We could now hear the distant thunder of the big guns. We were busy all day organizing and preparing to push forward and didn't get a wink of sleep, or water to wash our hands, even. We left at dusk and marched on, laden with a driving rain and bitter wind, laden heavily with ammunition, equipment and gear of various kinds. Our entire artillery had started a terrific bombardment preparatory to our going over the top the next morning. The noise was deafening, and the constant flashes that illuminated the night, blinded us constantly.

As our mail is strictly censored, I will not give the names of, or identify the units taking part. A company went over in echelon skirmish line, then another company, and finally ourselves. The Huns retreated so rapidly that we did not come in contact all day, until evening. We marched a certain town, then. An

hour or so later 1,300 Hun reserves pulled into town by rail and found us lined up along the track. They were all taken prisoners. Large parties of prisoners were now being sent back behind our lines. 6,000 were taken that first day of our big drive (the 12th). That night, for the first time in 36 hours, we slept, safe in bomb-proof dugouts. All that day too, we saw, as we have seen every day since, big air battles—saw planes. Hun and French and American go crashing to the ground, sometimes on fire. Huge tanks led us through the Hun trenches. One tank, being rather small, fell nose first into the trench, but it being in gas heavily armored and armed, and the Huns being obliged to retreat so rapidly, they were unable to capture it, it finally got out. In going to the rear, it ran over an American soldier who was sleeping in its path. It certainly was a terrible sight.

The Hun trenches, through which we passed, gave ample evidence of what a surprise the blow was. Sheet ironed to keep out the wet, they held Victrolas, books, electric lights and small stoves, and many French women were released when we captured the Boches.

The next day, about 4 p. m. we pushed on again. I don't expect to be able to tell of that night, because it "beggars description," but I will try. We pushed through, first, acres of barbed wire, and it was pitch dark mind you. Finally, spent and torn, we reached a thorny wood, matted with barbed wire. We penetrated this with huge shells throwing masses of wet earth all over us, and spitefully little shell whining past, but miraculously hitting no one. We reached a heavy wood so close to the Hun that he never thought of our being there, and we were safe for the rest of the morning. That afternoon, my squad of automatics (the French shoo) was detailed to hold a portion of a steep hillside in case of a Hun counter-attack, until our company was relieved, the next morning, we ensconced ourselves in a big shell hole, dug it deeper, camouflaged it artfully—all to no avail. The moon

was bright that evening and a machine gun nest and two lone snipers high on the hill confronting us, spied us. We could not see them, so could only crouch low and listen to the whizz-bangs (small calibre shell) plunking our bulwarks but not quite heavy enough to penetrate them, and to the whine and putt-putt of the rifles and machine gun bullets, respectively, warming our ears. Fortunately when relief came, about 3 a. m.; the night became very cloudy an awe made a hasty and safe getaway. We rejoined our platoon, and soon the long column was on its way, double-timing across a field commanded by a Hun machine gun, and with shot and shell dropping everywhere. Only one man was injured, however, and he not very seriously, in the thigh. We got out of range about a. m. and spent the morning sleeping in a wood, marched all afternoon and night (last night) and here I am, resting at last. I forgot to mention that I was taken with a light touch of ptomaine poisoning the last couple of days, which did not add to the pleasures of the march. It is a marvel how men can endure so much, and on corned beef and hard-tack, too, with water, little and far between drinks. And yet, such is the elasticity of youth, we are already recovering our spirits.

During the time I was at the front, I was on various details (such as getting water, and raiding Hun villages for food) and I came across the most amazing trophies, a number of which I am retaining. Large quantities of Sterling silver, salad forks, desert forks, spoons, etc., all of which we were, of course, obliged to leave behind. A heavy beautiful Hun helmet, elaborately etched and chased in gold, which my squad and myself startled an officer at his chow, into leaving behind, while he beat a hasty retreat. I strapped it to my pack and carried it for about an hour, but it was so heavy, with the other stuff that I was carrying, that I ditched it.

I have a Hun razor, a locket set for three stones but with all of them missing (I can't open it, but perhaps you

can get some lickamith to do so) and a cap of some non-com. I will forward these if, after our next week in the trenches, we stop somewhere that I can do so, and perhaps by then I will have some more to send with them.

Now, I hope you have not worried at not having heard from me oftener. I assure you, if you receive a letter once a month you will do very well. Consider poor me, who have not received a letter for over six weeks and probably will not get one for six months. And be brave and pray that, as the world is fervently praying, the war will end this year. And remember the Huns are so dispirited and retreating so fast, that I have every chance in the world of returning to you unscathed.

Must close now to make preparations for the march. I hope the censor is not too hard on this letter. You may publish it in the home papers if you wish. I am carrying your picture over my heart, with the Testament you gave me.

Lovingly TED.

—W. S. S.— SERGT. WILLIAMSON BACK FROM BATTLE FRONT

Sergeant W. J. Williamson, expert rifleman of the 61st Infantry, is home on a 10 days' furlough visiting at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Williamson.

He enlisted in January before war was declared, in the regular army, and has won for himself the title of sergeant.

He represents one of the first stars to go on the service flag of Graves' Martial Band.

While crossing the Atlantic the convoy of the transport upon which he was traveling, encountered five enemy submarines, four of which were sent to the bottom and the fifth one was captured and taken in tow.

Sergeant Williamson has seen actual fighting service in recent engagements and was one of 37 out of 200 men who escaped in fighting

condition—the others either having been killed in action or disabled.

He says in one drive when they had the Hun on the run he was 11 days with but little sleep. They kept the enemy going after having him once started and won for themselves a standing among the French fighters equal to none other upon the battle field.

He also tells of the wonderful work of the Red Cross and Salvation Army right on the firing line. Upon one occasion he says the women brought hot doughnuts and hot coffee to the boys right in the trenches with the enemy only a short ways removed.

Sergeant Williamson is a nephew of Joseph Townsend of Powell Butte.

—W. S. S.— MAN SELLS; GOES TO WAR.

James L. Blanchard, 42, With Wife and 7 Children, Does His Bit.

James L. Blanchard, 42 years old, farmer, receives \$65 a month from the Government as a member of the Students' Army Training Corps. Mr. Blanchard, who is the oldest man in the S. A. T. C. here, receives a monthly allotment of \$15 for his wife, \$10 for the oldest child, \$7.50 for the second, and \$5 each for the other children up to a maximum of \$50. He has seven children, the eldest being 18. Three of the children are in high school, three in grammar school, and the seventh is an infant.

Mr. Blanchard read of the need for 10,000 officers for the Army, sold his farm near Prineville and entered the Students' Training Corps. He is enthusiastic about his work there.

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Men's Winter Union Suits in pure wool. Some are flannel and others are wool ribbed. We have all priced garments in this line, \$2.75, \$3.00, \$3.50, \$4.00, \$5.50, \$6.00 per suit. Also men's silk wool union suits, at \$7.50 and \$8.00 per suit.

Boys' Heavy Fleece Lined Winter Union Suits. These are very satisfactory for boys' winter wear. Our stock is complete in all sizes and priced at the low price of only \$1.75 per suit.

Men's Suits for Fall have arrived. Remember we handle only one suit of a kind except blue serges. The elimination of belts, pleats, and all such extra trimmings has increased the appreciation of better designing and better tailoring. Watch our windows... They are priced at from \$20.00 to \$37.50.

A Good Overcoat. Our Fall line of men's overcoats are here. Double comfort is a feature of our Fall overcoats; comfort in their snug protection and in their warmth, and comfort in their admirable styles. Like our good suits, they hail from the home of Brandegee Kincaid Clothes. Our Overcoats are moderately priced at \$18.50 to \$30.00. Only one of a kind.

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