

"OVER THERE" THE MEN IN KHAKI FIND TIME TO WRITE

Water Sports Popular With Soldiers in France.

George McPaul Says Weather Has Been Very Warm Overcast.

GEORGE A. MCPAUL, formerly employed in the O-W-R. & N. office as a statistician in the traffic department, is now corporal in Company A, 114th Engineers, located at St. Nazaire, France. He recently sent a most interesting letter to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. M. B. McPaul, of 120 East Twelfth street, as follows:

"Dear Family:—I am here before starting to work. And speaking of work, I am now chief clerk in the office at night. Part of my work is making statements and answering questions from 8 o'clock until 11 o'clock in the evening. The desk part of the work is one of the best features, and being on night shift gives me an opportunity to go swimming every afternoon.

"We go out and take a swim and then do a little running every afternoon. The result is I am feeling fine and have a good appetite. The weather has been very warm and I am getting a fine coat of tan. Jimmy Ritchie is still working days but he thinks he will probably be transferred to the night work.

"We have been very busy the past two weeks as everything is being rushed so that the United States will be able to take over her share of the fighting. I hear from the boys on the front detachments frequently and they all seem to be taking a great interest in their work.

"There is a new order out now that we can tell where we are. So get the atlas and look up St. Nazaire, my present residence. It is on the Loire River, which is quite famous for its beauty. Though I can't say that I appreciate it, as the Columbia has it cheated to death. It will be six months this week since we last sighted the Statue of Liberty and I wonder how much more than six months it will be before we sight it again. The time really has flown so fast and so far we haven't any license to complain.

"Well, enough for today. I must get in and earn my \$1.35 1-5.

Oregon Soldiers Welcome News From Home.

Major White Expresses Pride in the State's Liberty Loan Record.

HOME town news comes infrequently to the Oregon boys in France, according to Major George A. White, now with General Pershing's staff in France and former Adjutant General of Oregon, in a letter to Major Baker. The letter, which has been forwarded to the boys, is a most interesting outline of local affairs and conditions. We are not very closely in touch with affairs here, but the news is in letters and clippings contained in letters. I am unable to get any home papers. We do not know to this day, for example, who has been appointed Governor, although I feel confident of what the result must have been, considering the present public attitude of mind.

"That news will get here along about the middle of this month or the first of July. Newspapers do not appear to follow a man when he is moving about and it would be a good idea if people with relatives in France would enclose with their letters clippings from the news papers showing news of particular interest.

"Letters invariably reach their destination sooner or later. I got one which had traveled about so much that it had to be tied together with a piece of string. But since I have been home about now, I have been home for five weeks, it was inevitable that my own mail should be delayed.

"Oregon broke into the news with its last Liberty bond drive. I saw an item in the continental edition of an English newspaper saying that Oregon had led the charge in the north. It was not a boast, but a fact. I am proud of the state from which I have the privilege of coming.

"As much depends on the army at home as on the army abroad, as you know full well. Oregon will look mighty good to all of us, but I don't know of anyone who has been returned, until this job is finished, as it will be in due time."

Railroader Has No Fear of German Bullets.

"Whispering Tom" Wilkinson Writes of Life in France.

CENTRALIA, Wash., July 6.—(Special.)—John Benedict, Jr., is in receipt of a letter from "Whispering Tom" Wilkinson, a former Centralia railroader and real estate dealer who enlisted in the Canadian army shortly after the war broke out. Mr. Wilkinson, following an illness, was discharged from the service, but has fully recovered and is now back in the ranks.

Mr. Wilkinson, who is known to Centralia men as the Northwest "Whispering Tom" as the result of a lost voice in a railroad wreck while he was employed as a conductor by the O-W-R. & N., is of the opinion that the end of the war is in sight.

"It will come suddenly," he writes, "but before it ends there will be thousands of lives snuffed out and thousands maimed and disfigured for life. I get mine, I am satisfied that I shall have passed out in a good cause, and it's a glorious ending. I have flirted with a violent death for years and it is fitting that I should be wedded with such a death at last. My only hope is that when I go I shall take a German or two with me."

George Stoney 'Grows Young' in Canadian Army.

Former Oregonian Con Tender Is Transferred to Infantry.

LIFE in a forestry camp in England, where war workers are getting out material for the trenches, is vividly described by George F. Stoney, for several years a copy editor on The Oregonian, and now a member of the Canadian army. Mr. Stoney, who just managed to squeeze into the army on the top age limit, apparently has found in military life a fountain of youth.

Writing from Sunningdale, Berks, England, where he has for several months been in the forestry camp, Mr. Stoney says: "We landed here last Thursday and started in at once preliminary training (Mr. Stoney has just succeeded in being transferred from the forestry to the infantry) under a man with a 'pop' enough to make an army of lame men walk straight, and under his constant tongue lashings we are beginning to forget we have just come from a life of ease. We had been doing fatigue duty—planting spuds, helping in the

sawmills, where huts are made and doing other such work. So far I have been touring the world as a guest of the Government and would be glad to feel that I could give some return for the investment. It is a cinch, couldn't it if left me in the forestry as I was about as useful there as a stretcher bearer in the aviation corps.

"This part of England is beautiful and the past month was perhaps the best. The rhododendrons are out now and they grow here in great profusion. This camp is in Windsor Park and was beautifully kept until the war started, so it still shows that care was bestowed on it and a lover of nature could find something new to admire every minute if he stayed here 30 days. Then every tree and hedgerow is the home of singing birds, where huts are made and doing other such work. So far I have been touring the world as a guest of the Government and would be glad to feel that I could give some return for the investment. It is a cinch, couldn't it if left me in the forestry as I was about as useful there as a stretcher bearer in the aviation corps.

"This being Sunday we were free to sleep as long as we pleased," continues an interesting part of his letter. "This is something which comes but once a week, but we had advance information that the cooks were preparing bacon and eggs for breakfast and that was stimulant enough to get us up by 7:30. You can always depend upon a soldier when 'eats' are to be served. I guess that is a failing of all of us, though.

"Bicycle riding is very popular with the American soldiers, especially on a holiday, and unless a fellow speaks for a wheel beforehand he is liable to have difficulty in renting one. That is what happened to three or four of us this morning when we tried to rent some. There has been nothing of importance happening since I last wrote you. Every day brings work and the days are much the same, but, of course, there is no certainty as to how long this will last. Just now we are all well and happy. I am feeling fine, have a healthy appetite and work every day. Sounds good, doesn't it?

Corporal George A. McPaul.

ing birds and from the break of day until midnight the song of birds delights the senses and gladdens the heart.

"I haven't been outside the camp since my return because I have been tired enough each night to rest and Sunday was not a very propitious day. Besides I was on guard Saturday night and took it easy. But that tired feeling is just sufficient to take me to bed early and make me feel like a child.

"French foresters have the meat packers of the U. S. A. beaten when it comes to using every part of their product," writes Willis G. Corbett, formerly of the Portland District Forest Service, now in France with the Twentieth Engineers. The packers are used to the use of the pig except the squeal, but the French use all of the tree, even the bark.

After this pleasant, Mr. Corbett describes some of the things that North-western foresters are up against in an interesting letter to A. G. Jackson, of the Forest Service.

"We have been on this work for a little more than three months," he writes, "and we have had an opportunity to work in the woods under almost every variety of weather conditions. When we first started to work there was snow on the ground, the temperature below freezing and we had a hard time keeping warm on the job. During March the bright sun shined down and the brush here around Puget Sound. The brush here gets just as wet as it does at home, but now we have 'tin pants' and 'tag shirts' and are soaked through and through. Since the leaves have come out it is worse than ever and we have been marking time in place, as it were, for weeks.

"This job of marking hardwood trees is quite interesting work but I doubt if I could do it for long. Our experience when we get back to the States, at least not for several years, unless the Forest Service adopts the French method of forest management.

"It is quite a sight to see a forest that has been cut over by French woodmen. After they have finished their work, the clearing is a beautiful park, for the stumps are cut flush with the ground, all branches and twigs disposed of, most of them being bound into bundles one or two meters long. All sticks from three-fourths to five inches in diameter they saw into cord-wood. Trees over six inches are used for railroad ties or lumber.

"In the hotel where we are staying now there is a fireplace in Bill's room, and in the evening we sit by a little blaze there. It reminds me of the summer evenings I have spent in some old log cabin in the woods where we filled the room with smoke in order to drive out the mosquitoes. The people here use stove wood very sparingly and I sometimes wonder how they ever get enough heat to cook a meal.

"But they do it somehow and the food is always well cooked and greatly enjoyed by us, especially after a day's work of fighting our way through the brush."

French Children Decorate Graves of Americans.

Earl Hewitt Writes of Failure of German Gas Attack.

EARL HEWITT is in France with Company E, 117th U. S. Engineers. He is the son of Mrs. J. H. Murphy, of 606 C street, Vancouver, Wash.

"Two nights ago the Germans sent us over some nice gas," he writes. "We did not care much, though, for we put our gas masks on until it evaporated. Although it got several of the boys, we had them in a few minutes. We certainly swore at the Heines just the same and tried to think of what we would do to the next Hun that we met. We had memorial service last night at 8 o'clock at a little cemetery. Several American soldiers are buried there. The French school children decorated the graves of the French and American soldiers."

Life on Submarine Chasers Has Plenty of Zip.

George Van Patten Takes Part in Chasing U-Boat Away From the Atlantic Coast.

GEORGE VAN PATTEN, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Van Patten, of Tillamook, Or., who has been attending school in New York and Philadelphia for the past eight months, successfully passed the examination for U. S. engineer, and has been assigned to a submarine chaser. He is now on patrol duty in the New York harbor.

"We certainly have some exciting time here with the Germans trying to get into this coast," he writes. "We

have been out more than 200 miles on the Atlantic trying to locate them, but never caught sight of one. But believe me, we had things to defend ourselves.

"We have been in New London, Conn., and Bensonhurst getting machinery and have everything ready to go across as convoys. It was not very pleasant when we were out at sea for we had to keep all portholes closed so as not to show any light, and the fumes of the gas made three boys sick and they had to go to the hospital. It came very near to getting me. There was not any light on Broadway or Cony Island for several nights.

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Whiff of Portland Roses Would Please Soldier.

France Looks Beautiful to Edwin Norene, But It Is Not Home.

ONE of those Portland roses would look and smell mighty good to us about now," writes Corporal Edwin Norene, from "somewhere in France," to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Norene, 5440 Eighty-fourth Street, Southeast. "The weather continues pleasant and otherwise. Usually the sky is clear and the air warm, sometimes very warm. The flowers in full bloom, the trees with their green leaves and the fields of green grain are beautiful under the clear May sky. By the time this reaches you, Portland will again be the famous Rose City and you folks will have quite a few in your own garden.

"This being Sunday we were free to sleep as long as we pleased," continues an interesting part of his letter. "This is something which comes but once a week, but we had advance information that the cooks were preparing bacon and eggs for breakfast and that was stimulant enough to get us up by 7:30. You can always depend upon a soldier when 'eats' are to be served. I guess that is a failing of all of us, though.

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French Foresters Have It on Meat Packers.

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Army Camps Comfortable in France.

T. L. Monteith Writes of Improvement in His Physical Condition.

T. L. MONTEITH, formerly an employee of the Northwest Steel Company, now "somewhere in France," with Company E, 18th Railway Engineers, American Expeditionary Forces, in a letter to his mother, Mrs. E. M. Hendricks, of Gresham, tells, among other things, how Army life has benefited him physically.

Extracts from the letter follow: "We all have good camps over here. We have plenty of clothes, overcoats, heavy shoes, rubber boots, slickers, oil hats and underwear. Uncle Sam keeps us in fine shape.

"What I have seen of France is pretty, but the United States looks better. We get passes on Sunday, so I get to see some of the sights.

"We are all getting along fine. I have to get a size larger trousers the next time they issue them. I have a pair from the last issue that won't meet around my waist.

"I have just been eating fruit cake two months old; also the cookies and nuts you sent. Gee, but they tasted good. Sweets are scarce here."

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A LETTER teeming with beautiful phrases, high literary qualities and subtle prophecies has been received by Ida A. Kidder, librarian of Oregon Agricultural College, from Private Thomas P. Duffy, with Company B, 25th Engineers, American Expeditionary Forces, "somewhere in France."

Mrs. Kidder and the sender of the letter are strangers to each other, but are, socially, except through correspondence. Mrs. Kidder has said: "I have read his letters to his brother and was so much interested in his fine mind and his beautiful spirit that I wrote him a letter. Extracts from his reply follow:

"I need no introduction to you, for I heard of 'Mother' Kidder long before I ever thought of being in France, but don't you again dare to call yourself 'old.' That applies only to people who have ceased to be interested in life, who have outlived their usefulness and are social liabilities, not to such dynamis of kindness, sympathy and unselfishness as you are.

"Mother, you never will get old, for the companionship of your incorruptible boys and girls and the immortals that live on your bookshelves have endowed you with a personality that defies the march of time, and those boys I saw in this historic Old World call you 'Mother.' Let me tell you, Mother, one cold night last fall, at a French seaport, I came upon a group of your very own Oregon Agricultural College boys around a campfire, recalling their lives at the 'old school.' They had left their books, the buildings and the campus on the shores of another sea, but in their hearts and on their faces they brought a philosophy that is more beautiful than lust of conquest, more powerful than its sword.

"When you spoke of 'the Huns' you used just the right expression. One cannot come over here and see them without feeling that they are the scum of this world. It is a holy war. It has its start in politics, but the sickening horror in the wake of the cruel German armies instantly breeds the defense of humanity the work one of crusaders, not soldiers.

"These French people just force themselves into our hearts. They are so courteous and gentle and so absolutely lacking in that fierceness that we always associate with successful soldiers. We find it difficult to account for their military excellence, but I guess their strength is behind the friendly smile. It is that smile that gave us the cure of our flag and the statue of Liberty, the most wonderful sight I have ever seen.

"Standing right out of the bay, with her back to America and facing the east and the greatest tragedy of all time, with her proud, massive head towering far above the very horizon, with arms held aloft, holding out to the forlorn exiles of the world the asylum of justice and liberty, illuminated by millions of candle power of electric light, the glow like a star, a descending god, and as her soldiers drop down the bay on their way to sea they say good-bye and pay homage to her, with words and cheers, but in awe-bound silence.

"I am not where the great battle is being fought, but am just as anxious as the rest of them to get there and it is not impossible that our wish will be satisfied. Troops going to the front always seem so impatient to get there that they are ready to die before they will be over before they get there. What do you think of this big German drive? It seems to me as though there were a political operation that a military one, as it is hardly likely the Kaiser is yet ready to risk the fortunes of the fatherland on a single throw of the dice.

"Of course our cause will be victorious, but the immediate balance of power, if indeed there is a balance, is so small that it creates a situation which probably has no place for the present. Would like to tell something of my part in this great plot, but it concerns a phase that is strictly 'taboo' with the censor. It is constructive in nature, but, like every other phase, it has destruction for its final aim.

"Whereas American expeditionary forces get a vacation, or is your time taken up with Summer school work? The experience your boys who came over here as soldiers will get will easily be worth a couple of years in college to them, for the very magnitude of these crashing worlds of action cannot fail to leave its imprint on the broadness of their vision.

"Here they will meet the soldiers from all the seven seas, for France is host to a world in arms, and when they go back they will think and act in terms of internationalism rather than in terms of province.

"When do you think it will end and will be its permanent result? Looking back on the crimson history of the past, it seems certain that the next movement is always forward, even the civilization at times appears to be going from us, and humanity will yet reach its Utopia, even along the zigzag highways and byways of artifice and chance."

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Oregon Cousins Reunited at Front in France.

St. Johns Lads Meet on Battlefield After Years of Separation.

RAYMOND W. MEYER, a St. Johns boy, has recently written his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred A. Meyer, of this city, that he has met his cousin, Charles Jarvis, on the battle fields of France. The two boys especially enjoyed their reunion after years of separation. Young Meyer's brother, Russell, graduated with high honors from Jarens High School this year.

"We are at the front again," writes the young soldier, "and we are pretty busy, but have a good place to stay—a bombproof cellar with electric lights. On my first trip I had a couple of close calls. The first time a shell landed about 100 feet away and burst. The second time I was in the Y. M. C. A. with shrapnel bursting on all sides. Pieces came through the roof and through the back walls. There was a regular rain of shot at the door.

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