

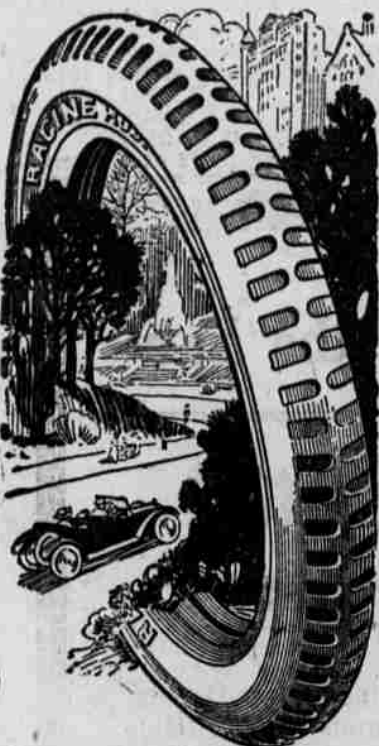
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SOLDIERS' LETTERS

Following are two letters from Fred M. Schuerman, who went with the 65th from Fort Stevens the last of February, but who was in quarantine two different times for scarlet fever while in Camp Merritt and detained two months after his regiment had sailed:

At Sea.
My Dear Mother: Three weeks go we left Merritt and now we are about three staggers and a full from port, but hard luck has delayed us. About two days out on a quiet night the steersman of one of the other transports decided he didn't like the look of cook or captain of our ship and took a ram at us, just hard enough to stop a couple of holes in the ship and jammed my head into the top of a bunk. For awhile there was a shaky gang on board. We had to stand on deck in our B. V. D.s for some time before they decided not to abandon the hull. No serious damage was done, however, but it necessitated our putting back into port and making a fresh start which delayed us around a week. Nevertheless, we are glad it happened as the transport we are on now is so much newer and cleaner and better equipped to care for a body of troops. We had a wonderful passage, no rough weather until today and that was not bad, although some are seasick. The bunch is glad to be on our way to join the regiment. It is nearly two months since they left us. We have had a good many lectures on what we can say and what we can't—mostly can't. Anyway, there isn't much to write about. We simply left Camp Merritt and got on board. The collision was the only hitch.

Until yesterday we got only two meals a day, but then they started



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in on three. Maybe they figured it won't do to be submarined on an empty stomach.
This morning the convoy met us and seem to be taking excellent care that we are not molested, if those submarines can do any damage I'll eat one, especially in the choppy sea. You must have gotten my card notifying you of our delay, but it is hard telling when you will get this. It will undoubtedly be a long time before I hear from you. I want about six cartons of caramels, some handkerchiefs and dish cloths, but don't send them yet as I must have a permit, but cannot get one until I land. Do you hear anything from Ashcraft and Bill Holmes? Both write in jumps and starts. I imagine they aren't doing much at Stevens.

I am curled up on a hatch with a box for a desk and a leaky sky for a roof. I must keep my mind on my balance and the scurrying gusts of wind that want to take my letter to the fish to read, so how can any more than one corner be concentrated upon what goes down?
When I get ashore I shall sit down and tell all about everything. Right now it is fortunate that some people I know can't see me. I need a hair cut, a shave, a shampoo, a bath, a change of clothing from inside out and a real meal. Haven't had any of my clothes off for three days, except to change sox, so you know I'm feeling fine. Must close now. With love,
FRED.
Battery C, 65th Artillery, C. A. C., A. E. F.

May 13, 1918.
Dear Folks: I'm here, so is the rain and wind. They pulled in last night and left the ship this morning, marched about three miles to this camp and from what I have seen of France I think the U. S. A. is a pretty good country. Our barracks are only shacks and dirt floors but everything is slicked up. I haven't seen a bit of rubbish anywhere and what's more, no fire wood, so I blew up to the "Y" but there was none there, either. They certainly are doing a wonderful work. One can buy cigarettes and simple necessities here, also a cup of coffee—if you have the money. You may have American money changed here for French with no profit to them. The bloomin' stuff goes down to a centime, which is about 2 cents. However, the smallest coin is 5 centimes. The French are too blamed thrifty. I'm glad I live in the U. S., although they say you can get squiffed to the rail for 60 cents.

I saw what to me were some strange sights at the docks. Quite a crowd congregated, but looked on only in moody silence. No one is happy, every other woman is wearing mourning. Every one seems to be enduring a silent grief. One old gentleman cried when he saw us. Some French soldiers strode past with but a glance at us. They are strong, well set up men in sky blue uniforms. Some of the people paid no attention to us whatever, I guess the war holds no further interest for them. You see no young or able bodied men. They are either too old or wear exemption badges.

The houses look strange, all of the same style. Everything is stone and mortar with slate roofs and an occasional thatched one. None are over four stories and they are jammed into every nook and cranny. It is very hard to distinguish the shops from the dwellings, in fact, the proprietors usually live back of or above the place of business.

The autos are all gone, except those of the army. Nearly all clothing appears to be of cotton and wooden shoes are very much in evidence. A person soon knows that unusual circumstances are prevailing.

We saw a squal of German prisoners at work. They were dressed conspicuously and under a heavy guard. Ten to one they would rather do that than to fight.

We hear that we will be here only a week. I hope so and I think we will get back to our regiment without trouble. As it is we are lost sheep. There are about 150 of us in the same predicament.

From now on our letters are censored, but I don't know anything that wouldn't pass except our port of arrival and that isn't worth putting on paper. About a fourth-rate American city would compare very favorably with it.

I must close now, but will write quite often as the Y. M. C. A. furnishes the stationery and postage is nothing. With love,
FRED.

Miss Ethel Freeman of 261 Oberlin street has received the following letter from her brother Charles, who is a member of the 65th regiment in France:

May 2, 1918.
Dear Sis: I have arrived safely in France and am having a little rest from my trying voyage. We had pretty good weather coming across,

with the exception of one day when it became a little rough and windy.
No, I didn't get seasick, though I got sort of uneasy several times for fear I would. Several of the boys got sick but I got my sea legs about the third day out and had an awful appetite for anything edible, due to the sea air, I guess. Even the rough weather didn't bother me much, although the rolling of the ship made walking around difficult during the little blow.

Everything was crowded and inconvenient on the ship, not to say monotonous, so all hands were on deck with a real, heart-felt American cheer when we sighted the coast of France.

Everything was so calm and everyday, no one was worried or excited, and the weather was so good that it is hard to realize that we have crossed the Atlantic and the dangerous submarine zone, where hundreds of good ships have been sunk. The only things that would distinguish the trip from a peaceful voyage was the daily boat drill and the sharp watch from the mast head, bridge and gun platform, both by the crew and by a detail of soldiers.

Well, it is really hard to adequately describe the first impressions of France I received on that bright, sunny day I sailed into the French port. The only way I could think of it was as a big, beautiful landscape painted by one of the old masters. Its colors were so vivid, its contrasts so sharp, yet its whole appearance so peaceful that I felt I only had to reach out and touch it to rub it out.

Its background is a low, rolling ridge of hills, dotted with symmetrical clumps of dark green trees, with smooth light green meadows in between. Between the eye and the hills stretching away on every hand are well tilled fields on a fertile plain. Each field is sharply divided from the other and range in color from brown and yellow to light green.

Here and there, surrounded by carefully planted trees is the inevitable gray stone and plaster farmhouse with its bright red tile roof. Every little distance from each other is a village or maybe a small town. They are all about the same and very quaint. The houses are joined together to form a solid front right down the street; then they have funny shutters and dewdads on the front of the houses and the roofs are very sharp, presenting a funny appearance to the western eye.

Well, when I started this letter I was in a rest camp, but I have moved since then. This rest camp was a pretty good place, for we were all pretty frazzled out from our ocean journey. There we had clean bunk houses, good food and bath and wash house.

The French people to a certain extent were allowed inside the reservation at certain hours, and many and varied were the things they had to sell, various fruits, tobacco (French), chocolate nic-nacks, and some were even looking for washing and found quite a lot, too, for some of the fellows were flush with money and not with energy so the French "longche" looked like a fine way out of a disagreeable task. But the visible efforts of the fellows to talk with the French laundress were really laughable. Many and varied were the signs and noises made on each side in an effort to explain the work wanted or the pay required, but with the help of a few busy interpreters, things were finally straightened out.

The French are a very likeable people, very industrious and cheerful; after one considers the long strain they have been under, it seems wonderful how they bear up.

Well, I'm up in a training camp now where I can hear the guns on the front, which is not far away. Airplanes are common here, flying overhead all the time. I was out on an old battleground today and saw a position that was fought over back in 1914, so I claim I'm getting into the war in earnest now.

I must close now. I don't know whether this will all get to you or not. How is everyone? Where is Bert? How is everything? Tell everybody hello. Your brother,
CHARLES.

Mrs. Dora Young of Granite street has received the following Mother's day letter from her son Glenn, written to her from France on Mother's day. This is one of the letters that will be folded away and preserved as long as the mother who received it lives as a token of the supreme sacrifice she has made to her country in its time of need:

Dear Mama: Six months ago this day I was aboard one of the kaiser's favorite ships at dock in an Atlantic port waiting to go, I knew not where. That night we drifted by the Goddess of Liberty. As I stood there leaning against the rail I parted with my best friend. The Goddess seemed to wave me a good-bye with her beacon light, and thus I parted with my na-

tive land, perhaps forever, no one knows.

In my dreams I sometimes see that statue, but the face resembles yours, and the light ever beckons my return. I wish I might kid myself into thinking that six months, yes, six years from this date I might be able to answer that call. To know that same Goddess might hold a welcoming light as I return, and see me physically fit as I was the last moment I gazed upon her.

A queer life, this of mine. Never where I wished to be, yet always quite happy, in a way. Always unlucky, but in a way very lucky. I often wonder what this spark of life really is that a man will endure such as he does, and yet cling to those oft but smoldering embers. He knows that no one has ever beat the game; that sooner or later the end must come, yet he plays as long as the light burns.

A short time ago I was at a hospital and talked with a young man 23 years old, with both arms, one leg and one eye missing. He was happy because he was not killed. He had plans for a bright future, so why not I?

For each six months of loyal service in a foreign country we are entitled to one service stripe. This we wear on our arm. Here's hoping none of us ever have to start on the other arm.

They tell us special means of trans-

portation have been provided for these "Mother's letters." How ye all wish it was the end and these same means might take that which each and every mother is wishing for back to her. With all the love for you, and don't worry.
G. M. YOUNG.
Co. F, 2nd Bat., 20th Engineers, A. E. F.

**OREGON HAS IMMENSE
SPHAGNUM BANDAGE MOSS**

Prof. A. R. Sweetser, head of the botany department of the University of Oregon and state director for the Red Cross for the collection of sphagnum moss, returned to the university today from a trip to Astoria where he investigated the moss supply. He reports that there is an ample supply available at that place, and that work will begin on it at once.

The supply of moss on hand in the state is entirely adequate for present use, according to Prof. Sweetser. "We have down at the Eugene headquarters 100 sacks of the moss ready for use," he said.

Prof. Sweetser's work is that of locating all available supplies in the state so that in case of need all possible sources may be known and in readiness to be drawn from.

No moss should be sent in, he says, until a sample has been examined and identified as sphagnum moss. We have received a big sack of moss that

the sender thought was the kind we want, but which was only ordinary moss.

A sphagnum moss expedition took Dr. Haydon, Dwight Hodge, Raymond McKeown and Gus Lewis out to the bog recently discovered near Hauser. The quartet will spend the entire day there provided with the proper paraphernalia for the gathering of the moss. These expeditions will be of frequent occurrence throughout the season or as long as moss is needed.—Marshfield Record.

Phone Job orders to the Tidings.

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