

### War Impressions of a "Y" Secretary

Editor Eastern Clackamas News,

Dear Sir:

I have your kind request for an article regarding my work in France, and am very glad to respond. You will realize that it would be impossible, within reasonable space, even to mention all that came under my observation. I have limited myself therefore, to a few outstanding impressions out of a year crowded with interesting experiences.

First of all, I want to pay my tribute of respect to our American soldiers. I was with them exclusively during my year in France. I saw them in their period of rudimentary training, in the back areas, was with them during their tryout in the so-called quiet sector, and later saw them face the fury of the storm on the active fronts, they measured up, whether it was the grinding monotony and hardships of life in a wasted and desolate country, or the dash against odds over an open stretch for a machine-gun defended height, they never failed. Without previous military training or tradition, they had more dash and resourcefulness than any other army. Their spirit was wonderful. They were driven to the point of exhaustion, then when they had every reason to expect to be withdrawn for recuperation, they were hurled against another front and drove the bosche headlong. Some of the divisions were scarcely out of the line from June to November. I have never seen such complete exhaustion. Men sank down in the mud, when released and slept as if dead tho under heavy shell fire. I have seen them come into the field dressing stations and hospitals severely wounded, yet with never a word of complaint. They were magnificent, and are entitled to all the honors that a grateful nation can heap upon them.

I was impressed with the senseless folly of war. Without seeing it, one can have no adequate conception of its colossal wastefulness. I have seen scores of cities and villages without a house left intact, and every house was a home, and as such sacred to those fine and abiding relationships that bind the family together and make the home the shrine of every heart. I have seen convoys drag along the highways for hours upon hours, every truck loaded with munitions or with the accoutrements of war, representing the labor of the whole world, and every particle of it, from an economic stand point, waste. In the wake of the battle is the wildest confusion—

trucks up-set in the ditches, artillery dismantled, wagons wrecked, miles of torn and tangled barbed wire, the roadway lined with dead horses, clothing scattered everywhere, blankets, guns, ammunition, helmets, rations, mess kits, every conceivable thing drenched with rain and trampled under foot in the wild, disorderly order of an advancing battle line. All this besides the tragic human wreckage that also lies unmindful under the rain, or is carried with wounded and tortured bodies back to the ministering care of surgeons and nurses. Surely a League of Nations is preferable to this.

Another impression that can never be effaced is a new appreciation of our own homes and home land. France is a land of charms. Her civilization was old before ours began. She has wonderful cities and cathedrals, and works of art, her villages as viewed from the hilltops are picturesque beyond description. The climate, the vegetation, the scenery resembles our own Oregon, France's out of doors is well groomed, carefully manicured. There are no roadsides growing up to weeds, no waste fields of brush or stumps. Her beauty is that of a cultivated garden, but it lacks the rugged grandeur, the sense of freedom of our out-of-doors.

Outside of her large cities, France is unprogressive. Her methods of work are generations old, the mass of her homes are poor and bare, her children do not know how to play as do ours, her women are neither so beautiful nor so womanly, her men are slow and unprogressive. We must admire the sacrifice and devotion that all classes have made for their cause. It has been wonderful, and shows a character that the world did not suspect, but, having seen France, we love America the more.

I have been deeply grateful that I have been permitted to have a part, however small, in this greatest drama of all time. The Y. M. C. A. under great difficulties, and in spite of failure and weakness here and there, performed an enormous service to our armies and the cause for which they fought. There is no parallel in history for a voluntary ministry, so extensive and so intimate, and those who at home by their gifts, or with the armies by their personal service have had a part in it, need have no question as to the ultimate verdict upon it.

Yours very truly,

W. W. Dillon.

Estacada, Ore., Feb. 17, 1919.

# NEW TRAIN SCHEDULE

*Beginning Sunday,  
February 9th, 1919*

TRAINS LEAVE ESTACADA  
FOR PORTLAND:

6:55 a. m., 8:52 a. m., 12:52 p. m., 4:52 p. m.,  
and 6:30 p. m.

TRAINS LEAVE PORTLAND  
FOR ESTACADA:

5:15 a. m., 10:45 a. m., 2:45 p. m., 4:45 p. m.

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