

Letters from The Boys Who Have Gone to Make the World Safe for Democracy

Letter received by Mrs. Flora Campbell from her son:

At the Front.—Dear Mother. Just a few lines to let you know I am alive and well. I am in a new regiment now and have not had time to get acquainted yet so don't know how I'll like it.

Things are pretty noisy here just like the fourth of July all the time but we are all in hopes it will soon be over and when I get home I am going to do nothing but eat and sleep for a month.

Well mother I wish I could tell you all about things here but as I can't all I can say is that I'm all right. I will try to write oftener now that I'm located.

Your loving son,
WILLIE.

Letter from T. W. Zimmerman to J. Frank Stroud. (This letter was given us several weeks ago but was mislaid and has just been recovered. It is so full of just the things you want to know about France that we print it.)

My dear Frank: If you think I was not pleased to receive your letter, then you are badly mistaken. Received the letter a week ago but I have been so confounded busy that I can hardly find time to write to my dear little wife.

I had quite a time getting my mail straightened out, but I believe that everything is all right now, and that I will receive my mail regularly. It was just three months from the time that I left the states until I received the first letter from my wife. If you think that three months period was not a long one, well, then you never have experienced anything like it. It seemed like three years.

Well, I might begin at the beginning and tell you about a few of the things that have transpired since I left Portland on the 24th of August, 1917. Can you realize that it is six months since I left good old Oregon? Well, I arrived in Washington in due season, after an uneventful trip across the continent. On the way I stopped for four hours in Seattle, four hours in St. Paul and twelve in Chicago. Traveled over the N. P., the C. P., the C. M. and S. P. and the Penna. lines. Reached Washington on the 30th of August and on the 31st had an interview with Senator Chamberlain and of course as usual he did what he could to assist me in getting my appointment. On the 1st of September I went to work temporarily in the Claims Department of the Treasury. On the 20th I was notified to take my physical examination and on the 26th reported for training to Camp American University, which is a suburb of Washington. The Auditor, in whose office I was employed offered me all kinds of inducements if I would stay with him, telling me

that if it was a matter of salary, that would be very easily arranged. Of course, I was duly grateful for his kind offer, but as I had made up my mind to go to France, I was not going to miss the opportunity. He, the Auditor, then told me that he was going to send a party of 50 expert accountants to France to do the auditing, this party to be in charge of his chief clerk, who by the way is a prince of a fellow, and that I was the first man on his list selected to go. Of course, that made it rather embarrassing but as I already had accepted the appointment with the engineers, I decided to go with them. And now here I am. "Somewhere in France."

We were in training camp until the 17th of October, when 25 of us were selected for the first party to cross, and again my name headed the list. At that time there were about 100 of us in training. We arrived at Hoboken on the morning of the 18th and that afternoon boarded a transport and weighed anchor on the morning of the 19th at 4 a. m. All the first day we everyone thought that we would go to Halifax and then cross by the northern track. Sometime during the night of the 20th we changed our course to almost due south and held that course very persistently for three days. During this time we were in the Gulf Stream and it was oppressively warm. For three nights I slept on deck in a steamer chair. My stateroom being at the inside end of a passage, with practically no ventilation, and, as we were not permitted to have any lights at night, the current was all turned off and we could not operate our fans. The nights being the unpleasant part of the trip on account of not having any light, there was so little that we could do to amuse ourselves. The weather was most excellent for the entire trip and I was not sick a minute or did I miss a meal. Some sailor, eh, what? I never saw so much water in all my life and I just came to the realization of what we used to have taught to us in school, that two-thirds of the earth's surface is water; in fact I think that I can go the geographer one better as I almost came to believe that 99 per cent was water. We had practically an uneventful trip until three days out from a French port, when just at dusk, some of us who happened to be standing on the stern of the promenade deck saw something approaching in the water at a very rapid pace; the something that we saw passed our stern, missing us by about sixty feet and proved to be a torpedo. After it had passed us, we could plainly see the white wake showing its course. It is needless to say that we did not linger long in that vicinity. The same night, the Finland was torpedoed but managed to limp into a

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