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LETTERS FROM OUR SOLDIER BOYS

Officer in the Navy Proves Himself an Interesting Writer—
Royal Wakefield Reaches France OK—Jas Mollohan Meets
Up With Jimmie McNamee—Captain McClure Tells of
Some Real Experiences.

From Somewhere, Sometime, A. B. Cortright, now in France, writes his friend, Henry E. Clark, of Ione, two very interesting letters that we are glad to make room for in our columns. Mr. Cortright's first letter follows:

Dear Friend Henry and All:

Well, this little letter will be mostly to let you know that I am still in the land of today and not among yesterday's 10,000. But it will tell you nothing of the tomorrow for the tomorrows in this country and just at this time are very, very uncertain.

But I am well and safe (just this minute anyway) and getting along famously.

There are hundreds of things I would like to tell you, but the censor forbids me to mention the names of any places, any ships, or any dates.

Our troops are doing fine work and they are surely walking into the Huns, forcing them back everywhere they meet them and capturing prisoners, guns and ammunition. Ten thousand prisoners were captured yesterday, with many guns, some ammunition and stores and a complete regimental staff of officers except the general who escaped in an auto. We have introduced a brand new kind of fighting over here. It is the "20th Century, Yankee Brand," patented, manufactured, and promoted in Yankee land, and it is a winner.

The Germans have a world-wide reputation for unraveling knotty, scientific problems, but Oh, he is the most dismal, hopeless failure when it comes to fathoming the workings of a restless Yankee brain.

The last bunch of prisoners who came in here said that the Americans were not fighters but won their victories by mean, dirty tricks. They indignantly stated that they had sat up for two whole days and nights, expecting an attack any minute from the wild Yanks and then they saw them withdraw from their position. So they all laid down for a little much needed rest and then the Yanks came, and came, and came, and kept coming and well, that, they said, was the reason they were prisoners. I'll admit that was a "dirty, mean" trick to keep anyone waiting so long for you, and then come in the night when everyone is asleep. But you can't blame the lads. Those "dirty" little tricks were born in 'em, you know.

A Y. M. C. A. worker told me that she asked some of the boys out at the hospital (35,000 beds) what they would like best of anything they could think of, and almost every man said, "Just a little good, old, American candy." Can you imagine it? Out of all the things that a wounded American soldier could want, the one thing he did want was "Just a little good, old, American candy." I suggested to our boys that each one put in a nickel or a dime and as we had a good supply of candy with us we would buy some and distribute it in some of the wards. I expected about ten or fifteen dollars, but in 30 minutes we collected \$57.88. We bought six suitcases of candy and I wish you could have been with me when I distributed it.

One poor little chap, swathed in bandages (from Tennessee by his drawl) said Mister, I ain't got none of them things left to hold up, but if it's all the same to you, I'd like a little of that 'ere candy 'your a hollerin' about." He received plenty of it. But, darn it, Henry, when I saw an American boy with only one arm, feeding another American boy with no arms a piece of Hershey's Milk Chocolate, it just made me feel as though I had too many arms, and hands, and legs, and ears, and everything. Gee! One fellow from Ohio, a Marine, with his left arm shot away, his left side shattered and his left leg torn into shreds and splinters, said "Mister, they sent us through that machine gun fire six times, back and forth, and it just seemed as though every one was falling all around me and I was never scratched, and then just as we drove the Huns out and gained our position, a shrapnel got me. Now wasn't that hell, mister, wasn't that just plain hell?" I told him it was, poor chap.

The one thing that strikes me forcibly is the spirit of the people. The war widows in black and flowing veils, very evidently stricken with the deepest grief but very, very evidently willing to give yet another to the cause, had they another to give. The light in their eyes, the way they are going ahead with the nation's work—it all brings home to one the fortitude with which the people face the future, the unknown future before them.

And I wish I were permitted to tell you of the work the U. S. is doing here. The construction, the improvements, and the impetus they have added to all activities. In six months they have built and completed the largest and best equipped railroad yards and terminals in the world. Everything else in a like scale. It is simply immense to say the least. One French army chaplain told me that the English came over here and

acted as though they owned this country and proceeded to use it to their own liking. But when the Americans landed here they just acted as though they did not care a damn who owned it, and started in to fix it up for war purposes. And it is true. These people are simply astounded. They are living in a fairy land of miracles.

Well, my time is limited, so will bid you good night.

A. B. CORTRIGHT.

Same Place, Sometime Later.

Well the other day I bid you good night, but did not have an opportunity to mail the letter, so will take advantage of a few spare moments this afternoon and add a few items to my limited letter.

By the way, excuse this paper. I ran out of stationery and it is almost impossible to obtain any over here.

You remember I took one new ship from Portland to the East coast, before I sailed on this one? Well, she was sunk day before yesterday. Do not know how many of her crew were saved. You never know when they are going to get you, nor where.

I wish to say a few words concerning the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. You cannot imagine the good they are doing over here. The Red Cross society has entire supervision over the hospitals and the work they try to do is to bring a home touch and a friendly influence into the lives of the sick and wounded, and to provide clean entertainment and amusements for them, and they are succeeding wonderfully. They promote theatricals, minstrels, ball games, boxing and wrestling matches, musicales, etc., for the boys who are unfortunate enough to be wounded.

Then the Y. M. C. A. Oh! I cannot say enough for them. Their huts are full and overflowing all the time and they make every possible effort to influence the boys to try to better themselves. They have schools to instruct the boys in the languages spoken over here. And when a fellow goes into their huts, a fine, friendly fellow greets you and shakes your hand and makes you feel at home immediately.

Then there is more. There is the American touch about it. And let me tell you that every man over here is thinking about the good old U. S. A. and when he is going to be there again. But the Y. M. C. A. gives you access to American papers, magazines, books, music, candy, cigarettes, tobacco, cookies. You can meet and talk to some good, hard working, American women, and some splendid, fatherly American men.

And it all seems so good to the fellow who has probably never been out of his native state before and who suddenly finds himself dropped down in the midst of a people who do not speak his language. They furnish the boys with writing material and a quiet place to use it; with moving picture shows, reading rooms, athletic material (boxing gloves, punching bags, base ball material), conduct religious services, furnish entertainments, music, text books, novels, and in fact everything to make this place seem as much like home as possible.

Neither have they forgotten the officers. They have organized and furnished an officers' club house where we can rest, read, dine, have music, play billiards, and buy cigarettes and tobacco cheaper than you can in the States.

One Sunday (not long ago) I went out to a beach, not far from here, that is also conducted under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. for officers only. I will tell you of the day's pleasure.

Enjoyed a beautiful auto ride out to this beach through this perfectly charming country. Arrived there about 2 p. m. Played a few holes of golf on perfect links (clubs and balls furnished,) returned to the hotel and enjoyed two sets of tennis with two charming little French girls. Then rested awhile in the hotel sun room and listened to an orchestra of enlisted men while we were served with tea and cakes by some very nice young ladies just from Paris, among them Ambassador Sharp's daughter. We met officers from all over the U. S. and had a very interesting round-the-table chat. Then everyone went to the beach and went in bathing after which we all gathered on the beach and were entertained through some funny French games by two little French tom-boys who handled old, gray haired Colonels and young Ensigns alike in a masterful way. Returning to the hotel at 7:30 we were served an excellent dinner, faultlessly cooked, and nicely served. Music during dinner.

After dinner the choir leader of Princeton University entertained us with some of the good old songs and then we enjoyed a pleasant auto ride back. The day's outing cost us six francs (\$1.40 American.)

It is the first and only time that I have really been able to relax and forget the old ship since I left New York and oh! what a relief it was. Besides the amusements I have mentioned, there were available

American newspapers (a little aged), American books and magazines, smoked, billiards, checkers, and lounging rooms. A perfectly delightful place and all made possible through the Y. M. C. A.

Marin Luther, formerly manager of the John Wanamaker tea rooms in the U. S. is manager of the club. And by the way there was an amusing thing happened to him while we were out there. He has only been over here a short time and his French is very limited. He was having a little dinner of his own served him and he suddenly got up and walked to the door followed by two little French waitresses who showed every sign of being distressed. He dropped his hands and said "It's no use. I never can do anything with them." An officer who spoke a little French asked him if he could be of any assistance to him and he replied "Yes, for goodness sake tell her (pointing to one of the girls) that she looks so much like her sister that I cannot tell them apart. And then please tell them to bring back my dinner cause I am hungry and want to eat it." He had tried to tell them in English and they had taken his dinner from him twice thinking there was something about it he did not like.

Well, I would like to be back there now, mixed up in harvest again. It is disagreeable work but I would like it just the same. This business gets on one's nerves, somewhat. But I'm in it to the finish anyway, whatever that is.

I think I have done pretty well for this time. My letter may not be very interesting, but we are forbidden to write about the really interesting things. Will write you again when opportunity permits.

Very sincerely,

A. B. CORTRIGHT.

FROM ROYAL WAKEFIELD

Somewhere in France, July 27-18.

Dear Ma-

Well I am located for a few days I guess. Had a long hike yesterday, about eighteen miles, and I will say that I was sure tired and I am not rested yet. Would like to be home again, but I am glad I got here with my Company. We never saw a single sub on the way over here, don't believe there is many left, or else they are afraid to come up. I don't know what part of France we are located in but it is sure a green looking place. I haven't struck but one man from any ways near home and he was from Pendleton. He was in the naval aviation. I knew him about as soon as he knew me and he sure was tickled for I was the first one he had seen that he knew since he had been in the service. Well it seems as tho the Huns are catching hell all the time, from what little news we can get here.

Has there been very many boys left Heppner for Camp Lewis lately? How is harvesting, and can you get all the men you need or not? Do you know where Bob Buschke is? I haven't heard of him since I left Camp Merritt.

Day before yesterday I received 18 letters. Three of them were from you and the rest I didn't know anything about. I feel better now than I did when I landed here, am not near so fat. Guess I will get down to fighting condition after a little while. We are about all dead broke and no pay day but we are all satisfied.

I guess that the Americans, British and French are making the sauerkraut fly these days. Anyway I hope so. I don't know when this letter will get to you. I heard that none of the mail that we have written here in this place has left for some reason and if you don't hear from me regular you see it won't be my fault. I just got your letter yesterday telling me about the second Heppner fire. I am glad you got a good rain, but too bad you did not get it sooner. This will make the Spring grain fill out better and that will help some.

This country over here is quite a place. The way the people live, I don't see how they keep alive, but I guess they are used to it and I have always thought that wherever I could see anyone else living I could live too. In the building that I am staying there are about five families living, and four or five cow barns, chicken houses and threshing machines scattered about. Can you beat that for a combination. Quite a country here for showers but not any big rains, suppose we will get them later on. The only thing that bothers me here is that I am not getting any fruit to eat. About this time of year I was always used to quite a bit of it you know.

Well this is all the news that I know to write and maybe some of this will not pass but I will take a chance. Every time I write I have a little more to put on my address, but I get my letters just the same.

From your son,

SADDLER ROYAL WAKEFIELD, Co. C., 347th M. G. Bn., A. P. O. 176.

A. E. F. No. 2256073.

FROM JAS. MOLLAHAN

Jas Mollohan of Battery D, Field Artillery, under date of Aug. 3rd, writes John F. Kenny from Somewhere in France as follows: Dear Johnnie:-

I was delighted to get your letter a few days ago, and card from B yesterday. Owing to our location letters from home are more welcome

Continued on Page Six.

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