

Kansas Memory



Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

Section 16, Pages 451 - 480

These two volumes, entitled Letters from Kansas Boys: European War, 1914-1918, contain letters from soldiers serving in World War I. The letters were printed in Kansas newspapers between 1914 and 1918 and clipped and compiled by the staff of the Kansas Historical Society. The clippings are organized alphabetically by soldier's last name.

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McLaney, Lyle

Hutchinson News
July 16- 1918

Writes of the People.

Mrs. G. L. McLane has received a letter from Captain McLane which gives a most interesting description of the people of France among whom he is living. He writes:

France, June 17, 1918.

My Dear Harry and Folks:

Everything lovely, we took a long ride by rail across France, requiring about 3 days, rather uncomfortable in many ways—the men had lots of room in straw in box cars but officers were some what crowded in 2nd class coach.

Sights were very interesting, we got a good long distance view of the tallest tower in the world.

We are billeted for a few days only in a lovely village, officers all have a spare bed room in private houses, my bed is about three feet thick.

We see no signs or evidence of war here as we did at our last station.

The people are very different from those with whom we have been living, a much higher class, clothes, customs etc., much more like those of city folks in the states where as customs of the remote peasant folk with whom we were living were quite different. Folks here have in most cases a separate building for horses and cows and have houses instead of wagon-sheds facing on the street.

I will have to learn French, have very little time to study it. We have a French interpreter with us for official business. People here are very polite and kind. We have a band concert every evening, big crowd of women and children turn out. I see a number of fair haired babies about Margaret's size. Tell Glenwood that the boys here wear aprons over their clothes until they get about his size.

Oxen are used for heavy draft, boys his size and women drive them.

Behavior of the regiment is excellent, the Colonel put men on their honor, there is no guard and no need for any.

Light wine and light beer is served for an hour and a half at noon and for 3 hours in the evening at the many safes. They close at the striking of the clock, no disorder and no possibility of drunkenness on such light drinks, which are probably less harmful than Coco Cola and strawberry pop. It began raining last night and is still at it today. We hope it quits

before we start on a long march scheduled soon. Roads are good here as elsewhere in France. We have made so many moves we have quite lost out on mail. I received your letter No. 3 at Merritt in the states and your No. 5 here which is all I have received. It looks as though we will draw a high dry and quiet sector so you have no need for alarm. Must close. Lovingly,

LYLE.

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MacLean, Hugh

Topeka Capital
April 23 1918

MACLEAN CLOSE TO HUNS ON THE FRENCH FRONT

Topeka Boy Writes of Battle
Front Experiences.

Glad That Folks at Home Are Awake
to Conditions—Stops Writing
to See Air Battle.

"I am glad to hear that the people back home are waking up, and it is time, because I think everybody should have a few hours of wakefulness before they are rocked to that sleep from which they can never awaken."

This is the philosophical statement made by Lieut. Hugh A. MacLean, with the Rainbow division in France, in a letter to A. J. Stout, principal of the Topeka high school. Lieutenant MacLean is a former Topeka boy and a graduate of the local high school as a member of the June, 1907, class. Last summer he was with Battery A on the Mexican border.

The letter to Mr. Stout was written from "somewhere in France." In it Lieutenant MacLean says:

"At last this letter is started; but whether I shall ever get it finished or not remains to be seen. Just after I had written 'Somewhere in France' I ran out on the porch roof of my room and saw a good air battle. It was very spectacular and the Boche got away by some tall exhibition of what he knew about his machine.

"Last night I went to bed to get some sleep, which I needed badly because it had not been my pleasure to get any for the last forty-eight hours, and I was very tired. I was awakened about 11:20 by what I thought was somebody beating on a dishpan outside my window. It was the guns, and when I opened my window they were sure playing 'There's a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.'

"A little while back I was sent with a detail of sixty men thru a large part of France. It was a six-day trip, and the nights were so cold that the water froze solid in our canteens. The last day it rained and the mud was terrible.



LIEUT. HUGH A. MACLEAN.
Sees Forty Hours' Service Without
Chance to Sleep.

but for all in all, we had a very fine and successful trip.

"I am glad to hear that the people back home are waking up, it is time; because I think everybody should have a few hours of wakefulness before they are rocked to that sleep from which they can never waken.

"The men are all in good shape and are surely working hard and doing their best every minute. Day or night they are ready. There is no grumbling or dissatisfaction.

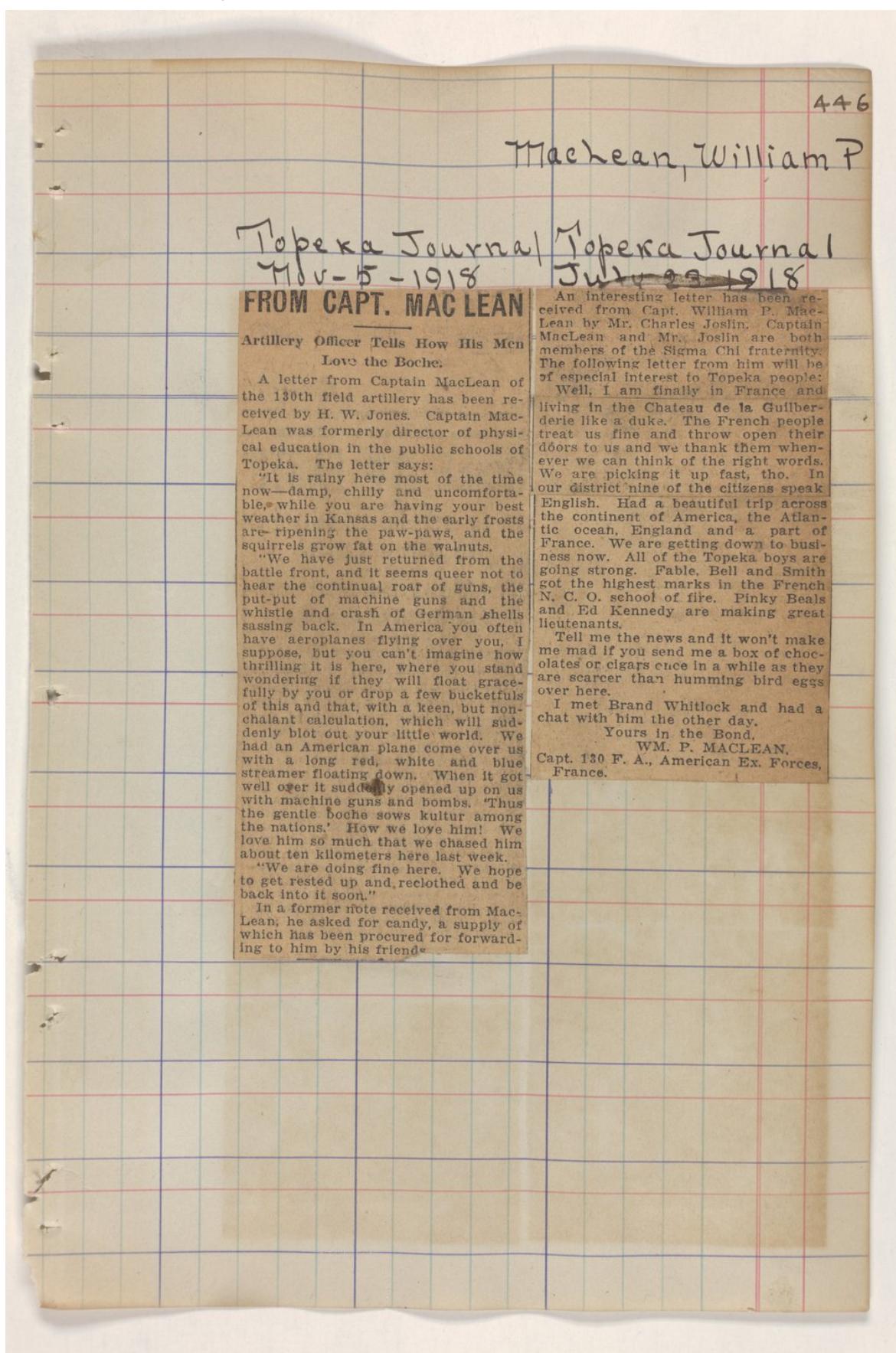
"Corp. Oscar Chappelle has just returned to the company from detached service at Newport News."

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Topeka Journal Topeka Journal
Mr - 5 - 1918
FROM CAPT. MAC LEAN

Artillery Officer Tells How His Men
Love the Boche.

A letter from Captain MacLean of the 130th field artillery has been received by H. W. Jones. Captain MacLean was formerly director of physical education in the public schools of Topeka. The letter says:

"It is rainy here most of the time now—damp, chilly and uncomfortable, while you are having your best weather in Kansas and the early frosts are ripening the paw-paws, and the squirrels grow fat on the walnuts.

"We have just returned from the battle front, and it seems queer not to hear the continual roar of guns, the put-put of machine guns and the whistle and crash of German shells sassing back. In America you often have aeroplanes flying over you, I suppose, but you can't imagine how thrilling it is here, where you stand wondering if they will float gracefully by you or drop a few bucketfuls of this and that, with a keen, but nonchalant calculation, which will suddenly blot out your little world. We had an American plane come over us with a long red, white and blue streamer floating down. When it got well over it suddenly opened up on us with machine guns and bombs. Thus the gentle boche sows kultur among the nations." How we love him! We love him so much that we chased him about ten kilometers here last week.

"We are doing fine here. We hope to get rested up and reclothed and be back into it soon."

In a former note received from MacLean, he asked for candy, a supply of which has been procured for forwarding to him by his friend.

An interesting letter has been received from Capt. William P. MacLean by Mr. Charles Joslin. Captain MacLean and Mr. Joslin are both members of the Sigma Chi fraternity. The following letter from him will be of especial interest to Topeka people:

Well, I am finally in France and living in the Chateau de la Guilde like a duke. The French people treat us fine and throw open their doors to us and we thank them whenever we can think of the right words. We are picking it up fast, tho. In our district nine of the citizens speak English. Had a beautiful trip across the continent of America, the Atlantic ocean, England and a part of France. We are getting down to business now. All of the Topeka boys are going strong. Fable, Bell and Smith got the highest marks in the French N. C. O. school of fire. Pinky Beals and Ed Kennedy are making great lieutenants.

Tell me the news and it won't make me mad if you send me a box of chocolates or cigars once in a while as they are scarcer than humming bird eggs over here.

I met Brand Whitlock and had a chat with him the other day.

Yours in the Bond,
WM. P. MACLEAN,
Capt. 130 F. A., American Ex. Forces,
France.

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Topeka Capital
July 23-1918

Captain MacLean Writes of Ancient France and England

Capt. William P. MacLean, formerly of battery A, Topeka's own artillery unit, and one of the most popular of Topeka's many soldiers, has been the subject of many inquiries by friends, who, having read some extracts from his interesting letters have requested Mrs. MacLean, who is now in Cleveland, Ohio, to send them further samples of the captain's writings. Mrs. MacLean has selected parts of his letters, which contain some of the best descriptive work that has come out of France in letter form.

His letters follow:

"Ramsey, England, June 3.

"I attended service yesterday in a cathedral 1,100 years old.

"The weather is beautiful and the days last from 3 a. m. until 10 p. m. I am feeling fine and eating a lot of good wholesome food.

"Southampton, June 8, 1918.

"They say we can write about this country we are now in. Our trip across England from Liverpool to Ramsey was beautiful—the cities and towns are so strange and quaint, and the country is so pretty in a cultivated way. The first land we saw was Ireland, early one Friday morning, and then Scotland showed up on the other side. We saw quite a little of Scotland—buildings, almost castles at times, and farms on the hillsides—and the water was full of sea urchins and jellyfish.

"We arrived in Ramsey at about 3 a. m., just as light was breaking, and marched thru the quaint little town. I could hardly believe that I was awake, it all seemed so strange. All houses here are of brick and mostly small—the streets are very narrow and winding, and no matter how small a front yard is, it is crowded with all kinds of beautiful flowers. Roses are very plentiful here now. As we marched out to camp we passed some large country estates, very imposing with the spires and chimneys rising out of dense groves of green, and holly hedges, and poppies and rhododendrons growing seemingly wild in the lush green fields. Our camp

site was one that was used by the Angles and Jutes armies on their invasion of England hundreds of years ago.

"The town is south of London, is very old and full of historical inns, such as the King's Head, White Horse, Golden Crown, etc. It is all almost as it was in the time of Dickens. Ramsey abbey is beautiful. It was the scene of a battle by Cromwell. The walls still show bullet holes and other signs of the conflict. In the floor of the abbey and in the cemetery outside are tablets bespeaking the faithfulness of wives and the valor of husbands buried hundreds of years ago.

"Winchester, not far from Ramsey, is a very historical old town, the scene of battles and sieges for centuries. There is also a very old and very beautiful abbey located there and in the churchyard a tablet to a crusader, thus: 'Here lieth Jonce Yorke, a verie valiant crusader who dyde in Asia from drynkings too muche colde bere, when he was exceedinge hotte. Let this be a warning to alle crusaders not to drinke ye colde ale or stoute whenne they are hot.'

"In Southampton is a big sort of closed arch across the street called Bar-Gate. It is what is left of a wall built around the town by the Normans. In a room in the enclosed part of it the pilgrim fathers first made their plans for leaving for America. The town has now spread out and everything is now designated as above or below Bar-Gate.

"France, June 1.

"I am finally in France after a fine little trip. Last night I went to the Follies Bergere. They had one scene supposed to represent American Indian life that was very amusing. The Indians were very pretty, dressed in their velvet and silk and satin, and they danced and capered very daintily, singing 'Dixie Land.'

"We have had lots of fun about money, both here and in England. When we want to purchase anything we hold out a bunch of money and let the merchant take out what he pleases.

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Very simple!

"We are eating at a little private inn run by two women. The cooking is excellent and the cuisine is very good for war times. We have had some most excellent cheese and salads.

"France, June 11.

"I have at last arrived at a place where we will rest awhile. I am billeted in the Chateau Michon, a very fine French home on the edge of a small village. Monsieur Michon lives at another of their homes nearer Paris, where his business is. Madame lives here with her little daughter, Simonde, and I don't know how many servants—I have run into a half dozen so far. The house is a wonderful old place of stone and hardwood. The furnishings are simple and in exquisite taste—the linen is the best I have ever seen. About seven acres surround the place—beautiful rose gardens, fine groves and meadow land, with a vegetable garden here and there.

"Simonde is a lively little girl, quite pretty. She dances and twinkles about, spouting French in a perfect stream. Madame is very kind and talks very interestingly, but a little more slowly and every now and then I get the drift of what she is saying. No one in the household can speak a word of English, but I shall learn the language very soon. I room with Major Thurston, who is my battalion commander. After not having had our clothes off for seventy hours, last night was fine in a big four poster, with a mattress two and one-half feet thick and soft, clean covers. My baggage caught up with me today. I have all clean clothes now and feel like a prince, after living out of a little knapsack for ten days. Our food here is excellent. Marie puts a dressing on common lettuce that makes it a work of art. The French people are so kind and pleasant. I like them all and they like us, I believe. Each one has lost something—some of them everything—but they are the best sports in the world.

"France, June 16, 1918.

"Everything is going fine. Still living at the Chateau Michon, but expect to move out next week as they are going to move our battalion up to another village. Everything is beautiful here now—roses and poppies everywhere. And we are getting down to real work, too. I am picking up the language a little every day and can

make myself understood in simple matters without much difficulty.

"Today is Sunday and church bells have been ringing all day. This district is mostly Catholic and one meets an old priest at every turn. Every village has its large crucifix in a prominent place on the main highway.

"June 19, France.

"We made a little move on foot to another village. The new one is much older than the one we were in and is certainly interesting from an architectural standpoint. In one way I hated to leave the place we were in and the madame at the chateau, and especially little Simonde, a sweet little girl. I am not in a chateau now, but in a very old but quite comfortable French house with a nice middle-aged lady, with a husband at the front, and her daughter, who takes great delight in trying to teach me French. The house is of stone—very old—with beautifully carved cornices, heavy beams overhead and brick floors. I have a nice, airy room, and an old wooden four poster, with mattress four feet thick. French women are great hand workers, and even the poorest people have all of their linen beautifully embroidered, etc. I have a crocheted bedspread on my bed that would easily cost over \$100 in the States.

"I went to church in a beautiful old Catholic church today, built in about 1600. * * *

"I was at a concert given at a very large French chateau about three miles from here yesterday. There were some very pretty French women there, who handled their cigarettes quite nonchalantly. After refreshments we amused them by playing some rough American games on the lawn.

"It is laughable to see our soldiers drilling the French kids. They line up about fifty of them and drill them for hours. The kids like it and are learning to use English quite distinctly.

"WILLIAM P. MacLEAN,
Captain 130th F. A., American E. F.,
via New York."

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Topeka Capital
Jan. 19 - 1919

Captain MacLean Writes Topeka School Children of Children of France

"French children are little Americans," writes Capt. W. P. MacLean in a letter to Supt. A. J. Stout, and the children of the Topeka schools. Captain MacLean formerly was a teacher in the Topeka schools, but he is now with the 130th field artillery in France.

"We are all glad the war has come to a successful end," he writes, "but this period is more trying than the days of great excitement, noise, long night marches, sleepless nights and sometimes eatless days."

"You know all about the war and the four campaigns we had a part in—Vosges, St. Mihiel, Argonne and Verdun, so I shall attempt to tell you some of the more peaceful aspects of our travels, some of the experiences I have had with these foreign—altho not so very foreign after all—little children that I have come across. In the first place, I judge a school, a family, a city, or a nation by its children. The little French children are little Americans in their good sportsmanship, cheerfulness, love for each other and love for parents and country. The only difference is that of language and customs. You can play with them and they could play with you and altho they might not understand your language or your games they would soon learn them for they are a very bright little people, and are so kind hearted they would rather play the games that you know and prefer. France and America differ only in the little artificial things of the big people. In the important, elemental things that children alone are concerned with French and Americans are exactly alike."

They Greet the Yankees.

"I will first tell you of the school children of Southampton, England, who gathered on their school house steps and sang out 'Hip Hip Hooray' as we marched by, no doubt thinking it was the Yankee national anthem or yell. One little English girl handed us a nicely written little letter telling us

how pleased she was that the Americans had at last come over to help her father win the war.

"Some Belgian boys, who had been driven out of their own country, ran along the beach at La Havre, wearing little uniforms with the tassel on the cap just like their daddies wore in the gallant defense of Liege and Namur.

"Little Smionde Michon, of Treblaze, near old Angers, laughed, danced, sang and played with her dogs. She loved the Americans and was chosen as the daughter of our battalion. Little Miss Madlof, of Le Plessis Grammoire, 3 years old, could sing the "Marseillaise" and "Madelot." She saved the cake of chocolate I gave to her, every last bit of it, to send to her father in the trenches. Antoinette Metevier was 17 years old, and I took her to the first picture show she had ever seen. She was only 12 when her big father, Jaques, the village butcher, closed shop and marched off to be a machine gunner for France.

Carry Food to Trenches.

"We visited a little family of refugees living in an old canal boat on the Meuse, and then the trip up the Moselle with happy villagers, smiling mothers and playing children at first, and then as we advanced no smiles, later no people, just recruits. A small boy in the soldier's uniform in the Vosges was driving a slow, lumbering team of oxen and calling out 'heepf' to them, just like a poilu. We saw the lace makers in the valley below the Vosges, the beautiful wooded hills of many clear streams and lakes, who had their linen spread out over the green grass like cement walls in a well-kept park and youngsters in their bare feet splashing water over the linen continually in some process necessary to their manufacture.

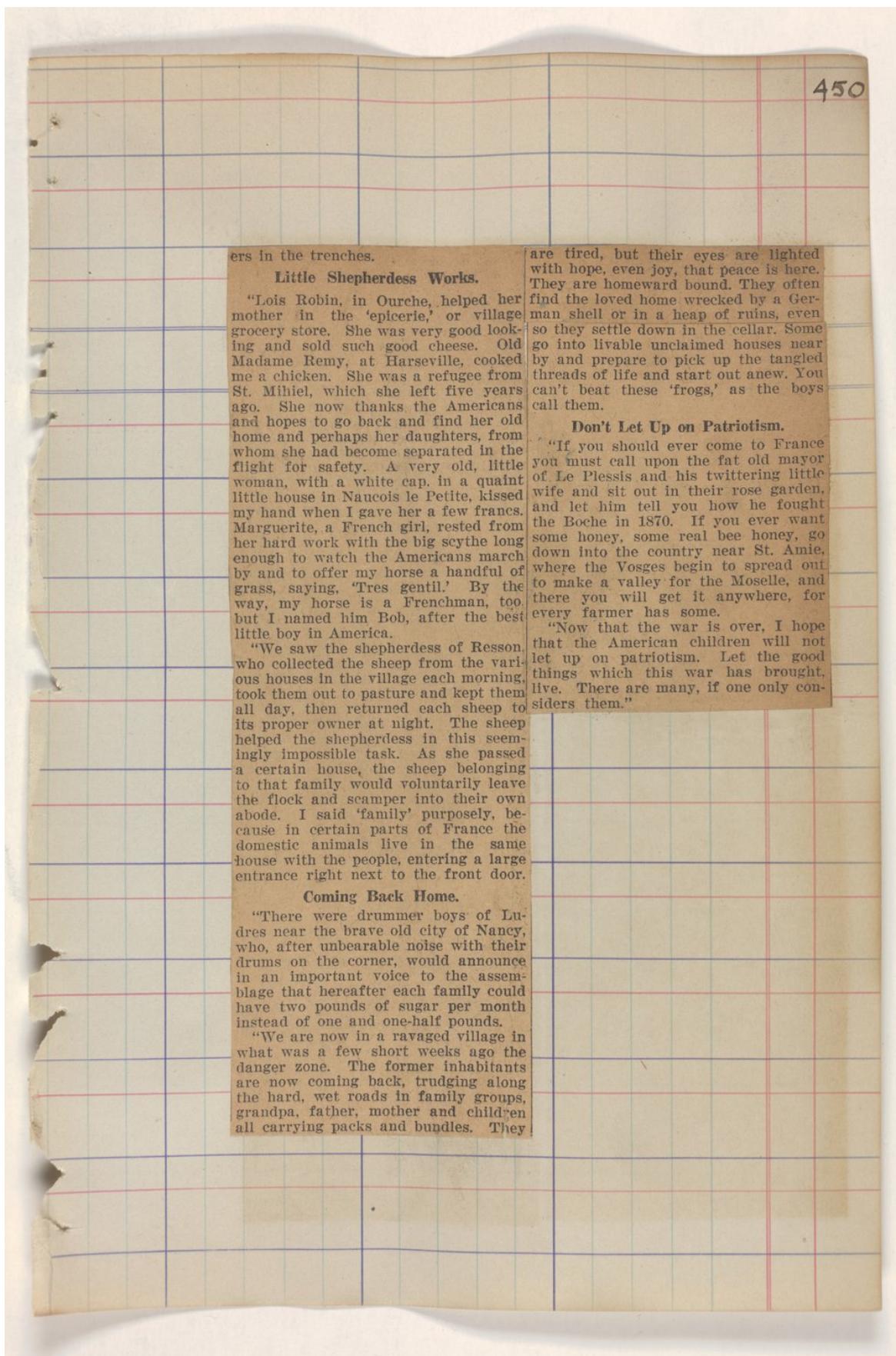
"There were flocks of little trench burrows with baskets on their sides carrying bread and wine to the French fighters. In St. Malo, near the Forest De Paimpont, in old Brittany, we found Marie Salmon begging cigarettes from the soldiers to send to her broth-

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ers in the trenches.

Little Shepherdess Works.

"Lois Robin, in Ourche, helped her mother in the 'epicerie,' or village grocery store. She was very good looking and sold such good cheese. Old Madame Remy, at Harseville, cooked me a chicken. She was a refugee from St. Mihiel, which she left five years ago. She now thanks the Americans and hopes to go back and find her old home and perhaps her daughters, from whom she had become separated in the flight for safety. A very old, little woman, with a white cap, in a quaint little house in Naucouls le Petite, kissed my hand when I gave her a few francs. Marguerite, a French girl, rested from her hard work with the big scythe long enough to watch the Americans march by and to offer my horse a handful of grass, saying, 'Tres gentil.' By the way, my horse is a Frenchman, too, but I named him Bob, after the best little boy in America.

"We saw the shepherdess of Resson, who collected the sheep from the various houses in the village each morning, took them out to pasture and kept them all day, then returned each sheep to its proper owner at night. The sheep helped the shepherdess in this seemingly impossible task. As she passed a certain house, the sheep belonging to that family would voluntarily leave the flock and scamper into their own abode. I said 'family' purposely, because in certain parts of France the domestic animals live in the same house with the people, entering a large entrance right next to the front door.

Coming Back Home.

"There were drummer boys of Ludes near the brave old city of Nancy, who, after unbearable noise with their drums on the corner, would announce in an important voice to the assemblage that hereafter each family could have two pounds of sugar per month instead of one and one-half pounds.

"We are now in a ravaged village in what was a few short weeks ago the danger zone. The former inhabitants are now coming back, trudging along the hard, wet roads in family groups, grandpa, father, mother and children all carrying packs and bundles. They

are tired, but their eyes are lighted with hope, even joy, that peace is here. They are homeward bound. They often find the loved home wrecked by a German shell or in a heap of ruins, even so they settle down in the cellar. Some go into livable unclaimed houses nearby and prepare to pick up the tangled threads of life and start out anew. You can't beat these 'frogs,' as the boys call them.

Don't Let Up on Patriotism.

"If you should ever come to France you must call upon the fat old mayor of Le Plessis and his twittering little wife and sit out in their rose garden, and let him tell you how he fought the Boche in 1870. If you ever want some honey, some real bee honey, go down into the country near St. Amie, where the Vosges begin to spread out to make a valley for the Moselle, and there you will get it anywhere, for every farmer has some.

"Now that the war is over, I hope that the American children will not let up on patriotism. Let the good things which this war has brought live. There are many, if one only considers them."

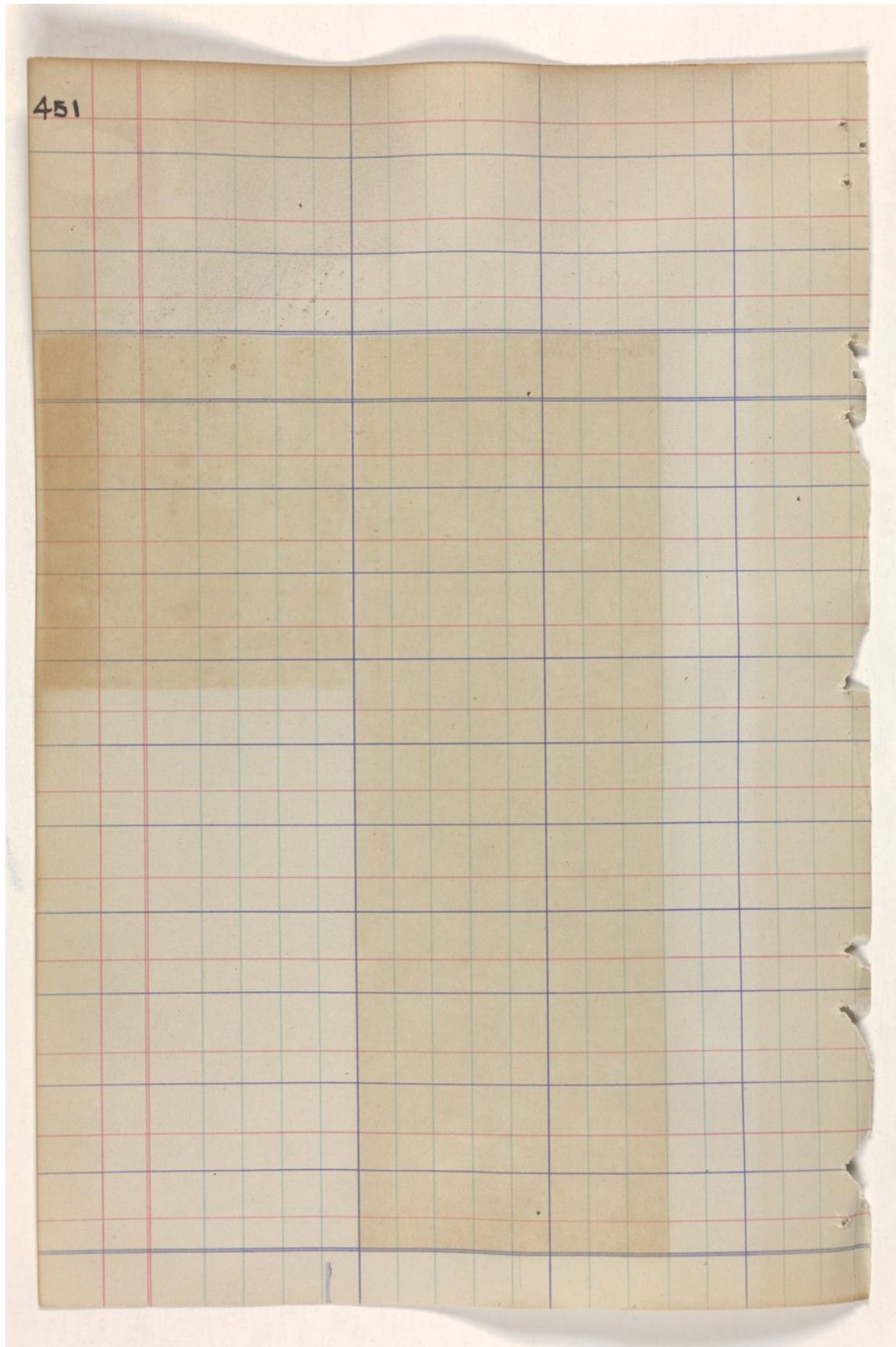
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McMillen, Delbert

Kansas City Star
Mo - 18 - 1918

DUG TRENCHES UNDER FIRE

FROM THREE SIDES HUNS SHELLED
110TH ENGINEERS, SOLDIER SAYS.

After Holding a Hill Forty-One Hours,
Kansas City Men Were Nearly
Nervous Wrecks, Delbert
McMillen Writes.

Delbert McMillen, Company C, 110th Engineers, writes to his mother, Mrs. P. B. McMillen, 2430 Lister Avenue:

After my last letter we went up near the front and were reserves in the St. Mihiel drive. We expected to get into action any minute for a week, but evidently they didn't need us. From there we got into some real action in the drive west of Verdun and it was what Sherman said it was. We were in the drive five days, with only a little bully beef and hard tack to eat and practically no sleep, because we took only our rain-coats with us.

It was cold and rainy most of the time, with mud ankle deep. We started out about an hour behind the infantry, building a road over the trenches, and worked all day helping ammunition forward. We ran into artillery fire right at the start, but only one of our men was wounded slightly. A German airplane came over and several times the aviator poured a stream of lead at us, but his aim wasn't very good. At the end of the third day the doughboys had pushed ahead so far that they had formed a pocket into the German lines and when the Germans sent in some fresh troops our men weren't able to hold it, so we were called out and sent up to dig a system of trenches on a ridge under direct observation of the enemy. We hadn't more than reached the crest of the hill before old Fritzi began pouring shells at us from three sides. I never dug so fast in my life. We got our trenches dug and the infantry fell back to hold the line there until more troops came up.

We were on this hill for forty-one hours and we were all nearly nervous wrecks. I would rather face machine gun fire ten times than to be bombarded by high explosive artillery shells. We

lost one of our engineers, several badly wounded and about twenty slightly wounded.

I saw four German airplanes brought down, one of which gave us several good scares. Several hundred of us were dug in in the side of a hill, when this German plane came over so low we could see the black cross on the wings, made a straight dive for us and turned his machine guns loose. * * * Along a road that ran into one of the little villages we captured a German machine gunner that had picked off four of our men as they were advancing, one behind the other. One of them still had his rifle in his hand and they looked, as they lay there, as if they were still crawling after the boche. I have seen enough of war this time to do me the rest of my life. When I started out I was going to get souvenirs. I'll be satisfied now if I can bring myself back as a souvenir.

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McNeely, George

Anthony Republican
Jan. 24 - 1918

Ellington Field,
Houston, Texas,
Jan. 8, 1918.

Mr. Glenn Cothorn and Folks,
527 Jennings Ave.,
Anthony, Kansas.

Dear Cousin:

I will now write you a few lines as I am confined to quarters on account of sickness. Yesterday at noon I had to report to the hospital to get my throat treated. My tonsils were swollen so I could hardly speak or swallow. The Lieutenant Doctor took a piece of cotton and drowned it in iodine. He then dropped it down my throat and pulled it up and down four or five times and then pulled it out.

Tell Aunt Bessie it reminded me of the time I had my mouth poisoned with matches and they had to paint my gums every day with that iodine.

He then gave me a pint of salts and some pills to take one every four hours. He nearly burnt my throat raw. He told me I had to stay in quarters, so that meant I had to quit work and go to the barracks. As I have not been able to eat anything for three meals I was nearly starved. I beat it over to the Canteen and I sure did fill. I did wrong because my throat is sure sore now.

Well we are having windy weather now. It has been windy for the last week. Sunday there was about a 50 or 55 mile wind and in less than an hour and a half five machines had fallen and three had to make a forced landing, so they called it off and today five fell in the morning and so they quit again.

I received your papers day before yesterday.

Well I must write to grandma Mac so I will close. Answer soon.

GEORGE McNEELY.

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McPherson, Melvin

Topeka Journal
Jan. 4-1919

SEE VERY LITTLE

Yanks in France Do Not Do Much Traveling.

That Is What Melvin McPherson Writes Father.

HE TELLS OF TRIP TO PARIS

Everybody in French Capital Looking for Tips.

Beer and Wine Served in All the Restaurants.

Melvin McPherson, with Company B, 64th regiment, has written to his father, L. A. McPherson, of 106 Roosevelt avenue, telling of a trip he had to Paris. He writes of the difficulties the boys have in getting away from duty long enough to see the sights on account of the vigilance of the military police. He spent Thanksgiving in Paris, and made the return trip to Givres, along the Marne river, where so much of the hard fighting of the war took place, and where may be seen town after town which had been blown to pieces by the Germans.

Speaking of the wonders of French decoration, he says:

"The rose windows in the churches are very beautiful, with the rich colors such as cannot be obtained now. Notre Dame church is especially beautiful, and I saw it inside and out. There is some one there worshipping all the time."

German Guns in Paris.

He says further of his Paris visit: "There are thousands of German guns in Paris, and German airplanes. The buildings are not high, about seven stories being the limit. King George was in Paris on Thanksgiving day, but I did not see him. I visited Napoleon's tomb and saw the orange windows which always throw sunlight on the altar, no matter how gloomy the day. I saw a large church which

had been hit by the German long range gun.

"In Paris wine or beer is served at every cafe, restaurant and hotel. It costs money to stay in Paris. I spent \$125 there, but that amount included the price of a violin which I bought there. It is customary to tip everybody. I got a haircut and a shave, and after I had paid for it, the barber asked me for a tip.

Boys See Little.

"I found that the way with the French railroad, it is not necessary to pay fare. I didn't pay a cent of fare on the whole trip. The boys here are given practically no liberties, and many of them will return without having seen any of the country. It was just army luck that I got loose, and I would have had only four or five hours in Paris if I hadn't been slick enough to put it over on the M.P.'s by jumping off the train a few blocks before we got to the station. The M.P.'s are not in the town, but at the stations ready to nab a person when he jumps off the train.

"I think I'll be lucky if I get back home by next spring. It looks as tho our outfit would be among the first to return of the class A men."

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McTernan, John S.

Kansas City Star
Nov. 11 - 1918

"DUTCH" GAVE UP QUICKLY.

Going Over Top Wonderful Sensation,
Writes Kansas Citian.

Corp. John S. McTernan, 355th Infantry, 89th Division, son of Mrs. J. F. Eagan, 1325 Monroe Avenue, writes from France: I am still in the hospital. I was shot in the heel. I guess you know all about the big drive. It started September 12 at 4:30 o'clock in the morning. It had rained all night Wednesday and it was mud up to your knees. You should have seen the Dutch give up. They yelled, "Don't shoot!" and threw up their hands, but we had to wait until they called, "Kamerad, kamerad!" I shot a couple for luck and took two prisoners, an old man and a young boy. They said they didn't want to fight. When we gave them white bread they thought it was cake. You should have seen me on patrol over in the German trenches. We had to lie like cats and if you didn't it was "good night!" A

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Madsen, C.R.

Topeka Journal
Oct. 6 - 1917

HE IS IN FRANCE

Topeka Soldier Is With Our Troops Abroad.

Writes Interesting Letter to Folks at Home.

HUGE BUTTERFLIES IN AIR

Describes Reception of Our Sammies in England.

Touched by Beauty of the French Maiden.

Private C. R. Madsen, Co. F., 13th Engineers (railway), U. S. army, with the expeditionary force, writes the following interesting letter to a Topeka friend:

Somewhere in France.
Tuesday, Sept. 4, 1917.

Dear Nellie: Suppose you must be wondering if the submarines got me so here goes to let you know they didn't, tho they did have the report started, from a false source, that our ship was torpedoed and sunk with all on board. I saw this in an American newspaper since we reached France. We did not even see a submarine, but A and B companies of our regiment, who were on another boat, did have quite a battle with one, but no one was hurt.

We came by way of England, where we paraded thru the streets of London and thru the Royal grounds, before their majesties, the king and queen of England, and we ate our dinner in Green park, inside the Royal grounds.

The English were glad to see us and gave us a warm welcome, and the English press gave us quite a write-up in which they called us the "Hair Spring Trigger 13th Engineers."

We had a long, tiresome voyage coming over and were on the boat much longer than is required for the passage in peace times. Oh, yes! Certainly I was seasick, but not as badly as I expected to be.

The French people were simply wild with joy when they saw us, and they could not do enough to express their love for America and their appreciation for our assistance in the war.

We had quite a long trip by rail after we landed, and we reached our present position in the night. We are quartered in quite a large city, and we are the first American troops in history to visit these parts. The city was in German hands early in the war, and tho we can still hear the guns booming on the bloodiest field in history they will never see this city again unless it is as prisoners of war. We have heard lots of heavy firing since we came here, but we are out of range. I have witnessed a number of air raids (one today) over the city, but the German machines are usually so high they are not visible with the naked eye and we can only see the shells from the French batteries bursting all about them. I really saw the first one today and it looked like a butterfly. They always beat a hasty retreat as soon as they are discovered and fired upon, so the firing never lasts very long.

England is a beautiful country and so is France. I really like France the best for there are many things here that remind one of our own U. S. A.

The French women are very beautiful and there are very few homely ones among them. They have been very kind, but nice to us, and seem as glad as any one to have us among them. Seems our presence here has put new life into the people.

I sure will have lots to tell if I get back home, but there are certain things we are not allowed to mention now. For instance, I know perfectly well right where I am, but I don't dare give any one the slightest clue, C? A giving you a little poem below which describes pretty well our travel and entry into this city:

In this distant land with everything new,
Where life and lives are of a different hue,
Where everything's strange to me and you,
Are you lonesome?

When you sat in the train one pitch dark night,
A passing lantern your only light,
The stillness broke by the artillery flight,
Were you lonesome?

When the muffled tones of the Frenchman's band,
Played the tune of your native land,
And then the "Marseillaise" so grand,
Were you lonesome?

As up the darkened street you trod,
Murmuring a prayer unto your God,

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Malone, Lyman E

Topeka Capital
Friday 12-1918

Realizing you were on foreign sod,
Were you lonesome?

And then at last your chance to sleep,
Into your dreams there did creep,
A loving face, Oh! so sweet,
Were you lonesome?

And now each day as you drill,
A feeling comes just like a chill,
To pass away with the battle's thrill,
Were you lonesome?

Or, as in your tent you lie each night,
In memory's dream your mind takes flight.
And you think of a land where all is bright.
You're lonesome, darn you, you're
lonesome. —Author unknown.

Now as my time is somewhat limited
at present I will have to close.
Maybe I can do better next time. Will
be glad to hear from you any time.
Your good old friend, with best wishes
to all, MADSEN.

SEEING FRANCE BY AUTO KANSAS BOY MAKES TRIP

Everything from Country Scenes to Monster Guns.

Lyman E. Malone, Former Court Clerk
at Goodland, Writes Sister of
His Experiences.

Lyman E. Malone, formerly official court reporter of the thirty-fourth judicial district at Goodland, who has been in France since October 12, as an army field clerk, has been promoted recently to assistant chief clerk in the administrative department at general headquarters. In a letter to his sister, Miss May Malone, of the Prudential Trust Co., Topeka, he writes, under date of April 21, as follows:

About a month ago I had a wonderful trip in an automobile, and I am going to tell you about it now, as I haven't had an opportunity before. I accompanied two colonels attached to this office on a long auto trip and wish I could tell you about where we went and what we saw. It was the first auto trip I have had since I left the states and I certainly enjoyed it from that standpoint alone, but much more so for the things that I saw. We left here about 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon. It was a splendid afternoon, the roads in this part of France are in good shape and the driver put his foot on the control.

Houses Built for Centuries.

Spring is here for good now, I think, and as we passed thru the country we saw the old men young boys and women out in the fields getting the ground ready for the spring crops. The young men and the fathers are in the line helping to check the German drive.

We passed thru many of the old French villages, such as you have read about and which have not changed for centuries. You can say one thing for the French villages, and that is, they were built for permanency as the houses are all built of stone with tile roofs. A house constructed of wood over here is almost an unknown quantity. Some of the villages we passed thru are close to the American camps, and a good many of the American soldiers were in the villages trying to "parley" with the villagers. About 6 o'clock we reached a moderate sized town close to our destination, where we stopped and had dinner. The French women certainly have the art of cooking down to a fine point and everything we had was cooked just right. Very few Americans have passed thru this village so the prices were reasonable. We reached our destination, a large training camp, about 8 o'clock in the evening and turned in.

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Mangelsdorf, Al
Manley, Calvin

Topeka Capital
April 1-1918

Inspects Heavy Artillery.

The next morning I was up early and after "chow" as the soldiers call breakfast or any other meal, I stepped around the camp to see all I could. Everything was spick and span, and being Sunday the soldiers were taking it easy after a busy week of training.

About 10 o'clock we started out in the car and went a short distance to inspect some heavy railway artillery. It was the kind of railway artillery you see pictures of in the magazines. I have always had a desire to see some of this artillery and it was well worth the trip just to see these guns. We were accompanied by an aide to the commanding officer of the camp, who explained the processes of loading, ramming and firing these guns. Here I saw some of the biggest guns in the world—Howitzers, which shoot an almost unimaginable quantity of explosives and guns which carry the longest distance.

Close to the Front.

After the inspection of the guns we started for the next destination which we did not reach until 2:30 that evening. It was a beautiful Sunday, warm enough for us to be quite comfortable in the open car, bundled up as we were, in which we were travelling. During the day I saw several aerodromes and many aeroplanes. In the afternoon for some distance, we were only a short distance from the lines and we passed hundreds of trucks going to and coming from the front. At one place I saw a big French observation balloon, camouflaged so that the enemy could not see it from the air.

That evening we ate dinner in a town which is within shell range of the German guns and which is shelled quite frequently; in fact, whenever it suits the diabolical German fancy to shell women and children and to destroy the creations of genius. The German guns did not bother us while we were there and we ate dinner in quiet. After leaving this town we were on the last lap of our journey and we reached headquarters about midnight, dusty and tired from our long trip—about 225 miles—but ready for a sound sleep.

FRENCH PICK UP ENGLISH AND ITS ABOUT AS BAD AS AMERICAN'S FRENCH

Atchison, March 31.—(Special)—In a letter received in Atchison today from Lieut. Al Mangelsdorf, who is with Pershing's army in France, he tells of two amusing incidents caused by a mix-up in languages in a French village. He says: "There have been quite a number of Americans about here for sometime, and one can see that there have been, because shopkeepers have picked up a few American words, and try to handle articles which appeal to the Americans. Yesterday we were in a little village and dropped into a cafe. One of my friends asked the waitress, 'Have you hot chocolate?' She answered, very sweetly, 'Hell, yes.' Apparently she had had a very poor American teacher."

"Along the street a priest met us and began interviewing us. We all spoke poor French, but tried our best to be polite. The venerable cure asked us when the allies would obtain a victory over the boche? One of my friends answered in perfect French, 'Last year.' The devout man gulped a few times, blinked his eyes and betook himself down the street. He was an old man and rather sickly, and I am sure it was quite a blow to him to find out the war had ended a year ago. Later on we discovered that 'prochaine' and not dirnier, meant 'next.'"

Kansas City Star
Oct. 25-1918

GAS ROLLED BACK ON FRITZ.

A Kansas Citizen Describes an Artillery Duel in a Quiet Sector.

Private Calvin Manley, who lived at 2001 East Eighty-third Street, now with an ambulance company, writes from France:

I am now back in a rest camp, but I hope I won't be long. I like it much better up at the front. Probably the next sector we take over will be more active.

About a week before we left, Fritz threw over about a thousand gas shells, which fell about two thousand yards down the valley from us and rolled back on him. He suffered more from his gas than we did.

The night before Fritz sent over his gas was our first artillery duel. Our

batteries started it about dark. They sent over a continual stream of shells for about fifteen minutes, then stopped. Fritz found out where they were and sent over a few at them. I thought they had silenced our batteries, but almost as soon as Fritz stopped our batteries started again at a little distance from their former position. They kept it up for fifteen minutes again, then stopped. Fritz opened up on that position, but the same thing had happened again—they were not there.

Then as soon as they got the range from the new position they let fly at Fritz again. Our batteries must have injured Fritz a lot from the way he acted the next day and night. That night he sent over his gas, but didn't have any luck.

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Manning, Lloyd
Mansfield, Paul

Marka News
Nov. 29 - 1918

Kansas City Star
May 22-1918

Letter From Lloyd Manning.

Somewhere in France.
Dear Mother: As I haven't much to do today I will try to write you a letter. How is everybody in Agenda? I have been so busy of late dodging shells that I haven't had time to write. We are having real cool weather but not as cold as it will get I guess. You wanted to know what I have to do. I will try to tell you the best I can. I am in the field hospital. Of course that don't mean on the battlefield. We stay from five to ten miles behind the lines and fix up the boys when the ambulance brings them to us.

We took nearly a thousand patients through our hospital in one night. Some of the time we were working under shell fire, which is not altogether a pleasant thing to do.

Our division has seen action four different times. The Allies are driving the Dutch hard now and I think we will soon have them in Berlin. I tell you the kaiser and his confounded army is going to soon be a thing of the past and then I will make you a visit. Old Jerry came over in an aeroplane one night and dropped some bombs near us and the next three nights they throwed shells at us. We all stayed pretty close to a dugout, so when we heard a shell coming we could dive in headfirst.

We sure saw a pretty battle in the air one evening. There were six or seven of our planes after a big boche plane. They fought about twenty minutes before they brought Fritz down. There were two men in it and both were killed. Well, I guess I will close and go to supper. We have plenty to eat and wear. Don't worry about me and tell all hello for me because I can't write to all.

Be sure and write lots of letters for it sure takes the joy out of life when I don't get a letter once a week anyhow.

Au revoir, but not good-bye,
1st Class Pvt. LLOYD MANNING,
21st Field Hospital, A. E. F.
A. P. O. 746, 4th San. Train.

A GERMAN AIR CAPTAIN JUMPS

Fall of a Mile Almost Buried Body of a Boche.

Paul Mansfield of Arkansas City, Kas., writes from France:
The napkin rings I sent you were made out of a German airplane shot down where our regiment is stationed. It fell ten thousand feet and was shot down by a French aviator. A German captain was in the machine with the pilot. The machine caught on fire as it fell and the captain jumped out when it was about a mile high. He was almost buried when he struck the earth. I got part of the crank shaft and the aluminum crank case, have made some hammers and other things out of it. I have made several boilermaker tools out of French 75 shells.

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Manson, D.W.
Marks, Ted

Kansas City Star Kansas City Star
Sept. 26-1918 Nov. 4-1918

SEES THE DOCTORS FROM HERE.

Soldiers in Hospital Miss Candy Most,
Lieut. D. W. Manson Writes.

Lieut. D. W. Manson, formerly a physician here and later at Burlington, Kas., writes from France:

I was over to — yesterday. I went to the hospital and had dinner with Doctor (Maj. J. F.) Binnie. I also met the rest of the Kansas City doctors. They took me through the hospital, and I saw and talked with many Kansas boys. One was from Burlingame and one from Iola. They are doing fine.

The boys miss candy more than anything else. The French are not allowed to use sugar for candy or cakes.

A 30-DAY MARCH, THEN BATTLE.

Capt. Ted Marks Describes Greatest Drive—and a Dinner.

Capt. Ted Marks, Battery C, 129th Field Artillery, writes under date of October 9: We have been in battle five days. We marched for thirty days to different places through all kinds of weather and arrived here for the greatest drive in history. The morning it started there were all kinds of guns, all sizes and noises such as I never will forget.

Then the drive. We advanced with the light artillery in the lead and my battery accompanying the infantry.

After we had shelled the line over which we were to advance, the tanks and airplanes finished the job and the infantry went in with a rush.

We got the Germans on the run, blowing up bridges as they went. We chased the Huns so fast that when we came to their dugouts we found their breakfasts yet on the tables.

On the last stretch of the advance my battery was close to the enemy and one of their airplanes swept us with machine gun fire. Their artillery was working on us, too. One shell landed one yard from me, but did not explode, burying itself in the mud. Another shell killed four of my men. A piece of another exploded shell went through the shoulder strap of my coat and never touched me.

We are now a good ways from the front, resting while someone else is doing the same as we were. Living is fine back here. I just finished dinner and the menu will show you how well we eat. We had rabbit soup with rabbit and potatoes, salmon croquettes, pudding, jam, cheese, pickles, tomatoes, chocolate bars, coffee, cigars and cigarettes.

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Marmon, Roscoe R

Garden City Telegram
July 26- 1918

LETTER FROM ROSCOE MARMON.

Great Lakes, Ill.
Camp Dewey.

Dear Father:—Well, it is Sunday afternoon and it is just warm enough to be comfortable as we have certainly had lots of cold weather, and as I have been used to having plenty of sunshine, it is quite a change.

I was up to Chicago yesterday on a 12-hour shore leave and it is a nice place to go, as there are lots of things to see and the people are pleasant to any man in uniform. The police were picking up all men yesterday that did not have their registration cards and they were using dray wagons, trucks and everything to haul the men in, as there were lots of them that did not have their cards.

I had a ride on the lake in a boat and there are certainly some large boats here. They have a pier that is a mile long and the street cars and autos can go nearly to the end, and there is a dance hall at the end that is as large as the M. E. church. They keep a Navy Board and a company of men there all the time.

All the towns along the road make special attractions for navy men. The people open their homes to the men, some of them are millionaires, and they are doing everything to make it pleasant when we are out of camp.

I can't tell how soon I will be moved, as they are taking the Company out pretty fast, unless I can transfer to something else.

I have not seen anyone from G. C., yet, but I don't have time to get lonesome, as there is plenty to do, and we have to be in bed by 9 and get up at 5 o'clock, but I am getting fat at

that, for I am ten pounds heavier than I was.

Hoping to hear from you soon, as I will close and try and get a little sleep, I am,

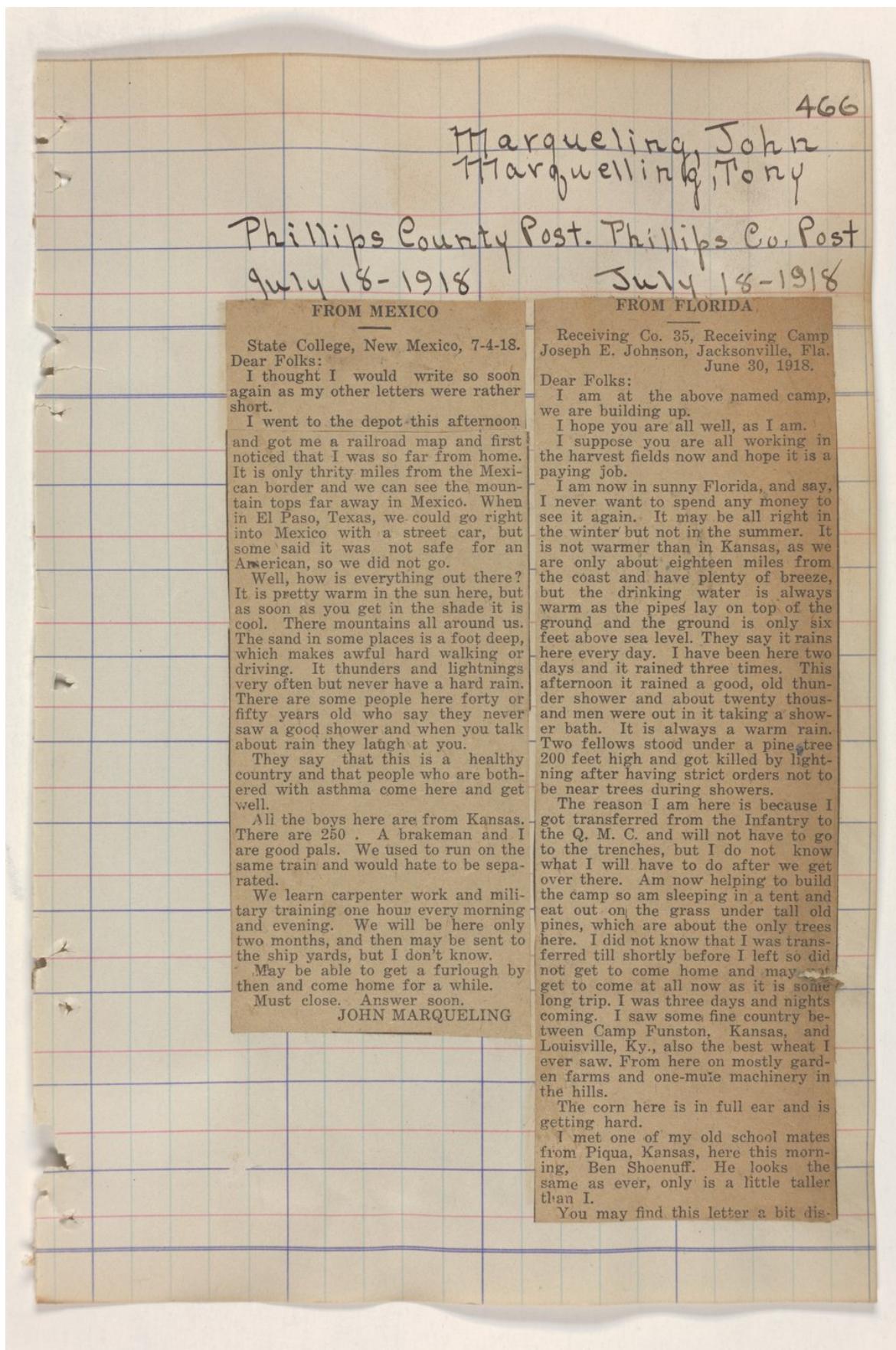
Yours truly,
ROSCOE R. MARMON.

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Martin, Paul A

Topeka Journal
Sept-18-1918

KANSAN IN FRANCE

Ex-Governor Martin's Son
Writes of People There.

Men Few, Nearly All on Fighting Line.

WOMEN TILL THE FIELDS

Respect for Them Noticeable—
Children Watch Flocks.

Pastures and Gardens Are Like
Paintings.

Readers of the State Journal will be interested in extracts from a personal letter received from Lieut. Paul A. Martin, son of ex-Gov. John A. Martin of Kansas. Mr. Martin is with the American expeditionary forces and was with the Eighty-ninth division at Camp Funston as instructor in bayonet drill. Before the division's departure for overseas he was assigned to an infantry company.

The other son of ex-Governor Martin, who, during the Civil war, was colonel of the famous Eighth Kansas regiment, with the army of the Cumberland, is also in the service. Harris Martin, who is an expert photographer, has joined the aviation service as a photographer.

Martin a Reporter.

Paul Martin entered the army from Battle Creek, Mich., where he had for some years been city editor of the Battle Creek Evening News, following the profession of his father, who made the old Atchison Champion a power in the early affairs of Kansas.

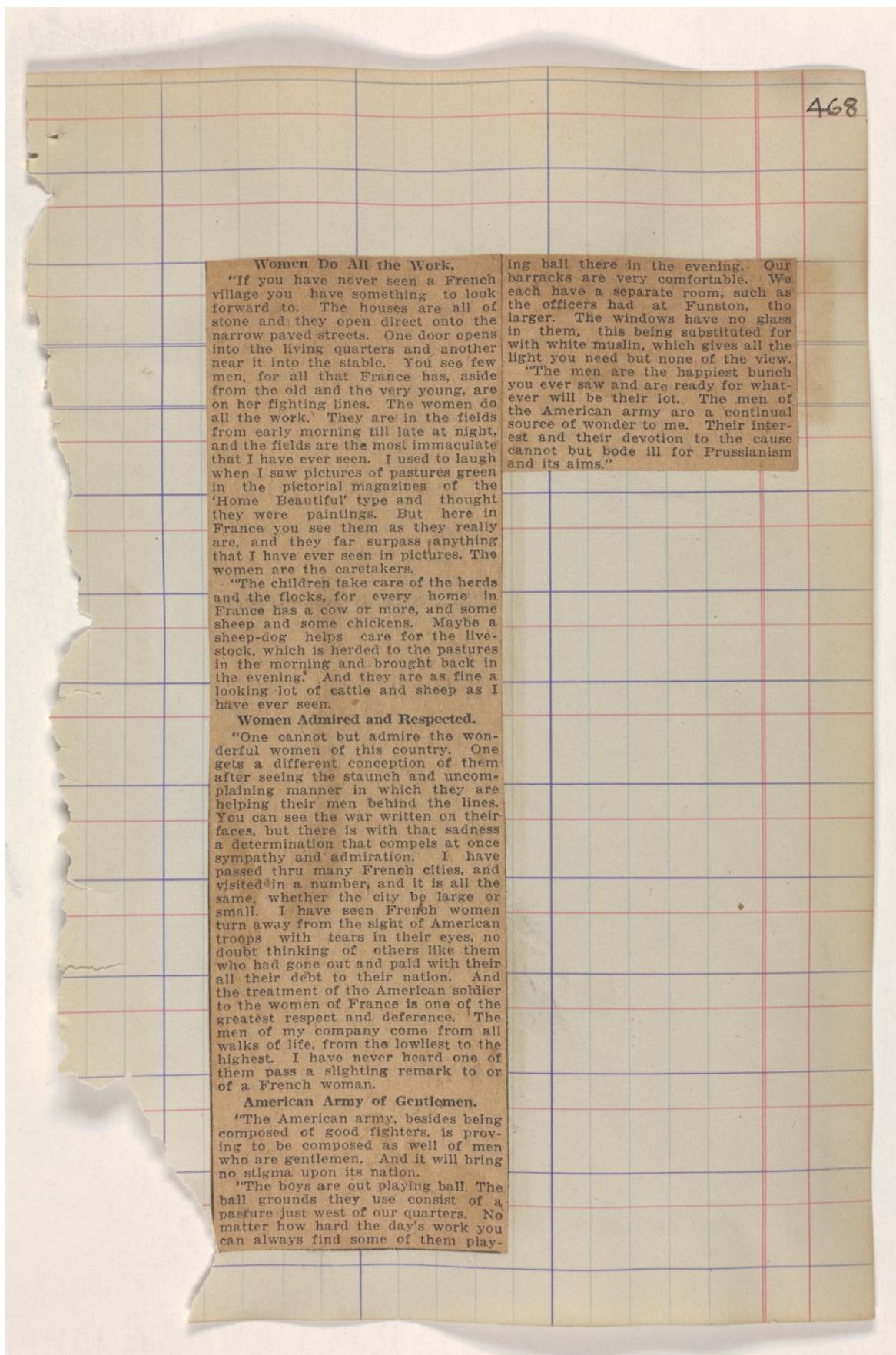
In a letter to a friend Mr. Martin says:

"Every morning about 4 o'clock the salvos start, and they keep going for an hour or so and then quit. There are times when we hear them in the daytime, but that is seldom, for the sector is not the most active of them, and the artillery seems to be working on the plan of just sending compliments every so often to let the other side know that they are not asleep on the job."

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Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers



Women Do All the Work.

"If you have never seen a French village you have something to look forward to. The houses are all of stone and they open direct onto the narrow paved streets. One door opens into the living quarters and another near it into the stable. You see few men, for all that France has, aside from the old and the very young, are on her fighting lines. The women do all the work. They are in the fields from early morning till late at night, and the fields are the most immaculate that I have ever seen. I used to laugh when I saw pictures of pastures green in the pictorial magazines of the 'Home Beautiful' type and thought they were paintings. But here in France you see them as they really are, and they far surpass anything that I have ever seen in pictures. The women are the caretakers.

"The children take care of the herds and the flocks, for every home in France has a cow or more, and some sheep and some chickens. Maybe a sheep-dog helps care for the livestock, which is herded to the pastures in the morning and brought back in the evening. And they are as fine a looking lot of cattle and sheep as I have ever seen.

Women Admired and Respected.

"One cannot but admire the wonderful women of this country. One gets a different conception of them after seeing the staunch and uncomplaining manner in which they are helping their men behind the lines. You can see the war written on their faces, but there is with that sadness a determination that compels at once sympathy and admiration. I have passed thru many French cities, and visited in a number, and it is all the same, whether the city be large or small. I have seen French women turn away from the sight of American troops with tears in their eyes, no doubt thinking of others like them who had gone out and paid with their all their debt to their nation. And the treatment of the American soldier to the women of France is one of the greatest respect and deference. The men of my company come from all walks of life, from the lowliest to the highest. I have never heard one of them pass a slighting remark to or of a French woman.

American Army of Gentlemen.

"The American army, besides being composed of good fighters, is proving to be composed as well of men who are gentlemen. And it will bring no stigma upon its nation.

"The boys are out playing ball. The ball grounds they use consist of a pasture just west of our quarters. No matter how hard the day's work you can always find some of them play-

ing ball there in the evening. Our barracks are very comfortable. We each have a separate room, such as the officers had at Funston, the larger. The windows have no glass in them, this being substituted for with white muslin, which gives all the light you need but none of the view.

"The men are the happiest bunch you ever saw and are ready for whatever will be their lot. The men of the American army are a continual source of wonder to me. Their interest and their devotion to the cause cannot but bode ill for Prussianism and its aims."

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Mason, Theodore L.

Topeka Capital
Dec. 22-1918

COVERED WITH GLORY

Topeka Boy Tells of Exploits of the Seventh Engineers.

Mr. and Mrs. George L. Mason, 1100 Garfield avenue, have received a letter from their son, Theodore L. Mason, of Company E, Seventh United States engineers, which was written November 18 from base hospital 89, where he was recovering from gas poisoning. Private Mason is a native Topekan, and before his enlistment, last December, was employed in the stationer's department of the Santa Fe. His letter follows:

"I know you are worried sick because you have not heard from me, but it is not my fault. You must blame Fritz."

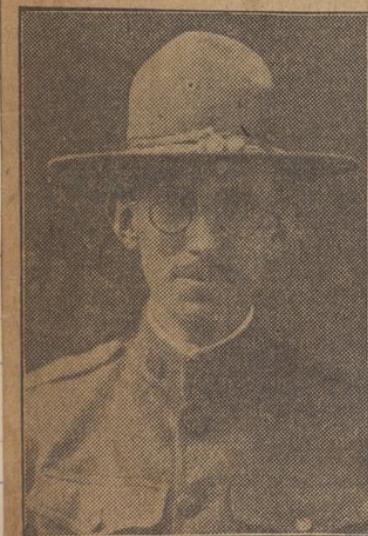
"I think I wrote to you about October 10. Well, we were ordered into the front line Saturday, October 12,

and reached our position about noon Sunday, October 13. We were acting as infantry and held the line until about 8:30 a. m. Monday, and then went over the top.

"The Heavenly Father is the only one who knows how I lived thru that hell of shells and machine guns, snipers and rifle bullets and hand grenades. We fought like devils, and the old Seventh engineers covered themselves with glory and French mud. I managed to keep going until October 18, then Fritz dropped a gas shell nearly under my nose and, of course, I was gassed, but not seriously, thanks to my mask and the training I had received in the use of it.

"They put me on a stretcher and carried me back to the first aid station, where I was duly tagged and put in an ambulance and started back to the hospital. I landed here October 20, and here I am."

Private Mason adds that he is getting along splendidly, and imagines that he will be sent home before long.



THEODORE L. MASON.

Topeka Boy Gassed in Midst of Big Drive.

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May, Oscar P

Topeka Capital
Oct-28-1918

YANKEES GOT FRITZ.

In a bombardment made by the Eighty-ninth regiment of Kansas boys, Lieut. Oscar P. May, of Lawrence, writes of the way in which the boys learned of boches hiding in dugouts. He said that when in the second line of the enemy a boche stuck his head out of a dugout and threw a grenade, hitting one of the Americans. Lieutenants Murray and May closed in on the fellow. The Americans then threw many grenades in dugouts in the rear of them and the follow-up men were said to have taken out several wounded boches who were waiting to attack the Americans from the rear.

Excerpts from an interesting letter recently written by Floyd John Evans, first lieutenant and chaplain, while he was on an American transport bound for "over there," show interesting sidelights of life on shipboard. The letter was written to J. L. Allen, of Topeka.

"The first day out," says Evans, "we learned that the ship was crowded—Uncle Sam wastes no space—you folks at home preach 'Hooverizing.' On this ship it is altogether unnecessary, but we certainly are 'transportationized.' I do wish that one of the officers' bath-rooms did not have 'out-of-order' written across the door—but reckon Uncle Sam did not figure on cleaning up anybody on this trip, except the kaiser."

"A large percentage of the soldiers on board are colored. They are a study. One asked me yesterday: 'Mis-tah, ain't tha no railroad at all what a fellah can come back on?' They certainly dislike the water. Most of them have become seasick—decidedly so. Personally, yours truly has not been ill so far, but admit I have been slightly indisposed for a day or two. But now I have 'sea legs' and sympathy for the less fortunate."

"On a very recent day our lookouts sighted an object in the far-distant blue. It looked like a barrel. Some 'saw' a periscope. Instantly our gunners were on the job; 'boomed' away at the object. It seemed to disappear. What lent color to the probability of its being an enemy submarine is the fact that the object seemed to be lying in wait—directly in the path of a little tanker. Our gunners declare they hit it, whatever it was. The excitement afforded a break in this tiresome and monotonous trip."

"The gunners on this ship are reported to have 'accounted for' a number of Hun sea-dogs, and are very much alert, and anxious to sustain their reputation: they have the proper esprit for certain."

"Yesterday morning one enterprising soldier was selling candy. Evidently he knew his mates were feeling poorly and could hardly 'make it' to the canteen in person, so he peddled the candy about, assuring his comrades that it would prevent seasickness. He did a thriving business in the morning. In the afternoon he did not do quite so well—he became violently seasick."

"The night was a furious one to try to sleep thru. The fact that we were in the danger zone, and that I was confidentially informed (rumors are still thick) that submarines were sighted near our last night's location, did not bother me half as much as the lurchings of this ship, with the continual 'smash! bang!' as trunks, tin mess kits, and what-not sliding across the floors back and forth, with the occasional crashing of glass as some cabin boy falls on the floor, or maybe some tin bucket comes tumbling down the stairs only to douse water over some of the sleeping men around the hallways and add their chatter to the turmoil."

"There was plenty of room in all mess halls, yesterday; I was there this morning. This morning, thank God, we are in waters less turbulent, otherwise I wouldn't even be trying to write these rough sketchnotes—but rough as they are, I assure you, they are as velvet compared with this trip."

"Our long expected convoy from the other side has at last reached us, and the old, smoking vessel has been left far in the rear, now clear out of sight. So we are hitting a big pace and hope to arrive somewhere within a day or two."

"Last day! A chilling rain does not dampen our enthusiasm at sight of the distant ridge of land—land at last! Real estate has already gone up in my estimation."

"Regards to you and all Topeka friends."

"Floyd John Evans,
1st Lieutenant and Chaplain, U. S. A."

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Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

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Mays, J.G.

Morton Champion
July 18-1918

A Norton Boy in First

REGIMENT TO ATTACK GERMANS

Magnificent Letter from Lieut. J. G. Mays to His Mother; In Command of Right Flank in Charge on the Trenches of Enemy

An Augusta Georgia paper contains a letter from an officer of the United States Marines who describes the battle in which Lieut. Drumm, so well known in Norton, lost his life.

Lt. J. G. Mays, who writes this graphic story and mother love letter, was born in Augusta; he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Glasscock Mays, former residents of here, but living in Atlanta for the past fifteen years. He is a graduate of the Georgia Tech.

Young Mays' grandfather was Major Whiteford Russell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry F. Russell. Major Russell was killed in one of the last battles of the Civil War, and was twenty-four years of age.

An Augusta Boy in Battle

France, Saturday, June 1st, 1918. I hardly know how to begin this letter, for I have been through and seen so much since I last wrote, barely a week ago, that my thoughts and emotions are still most chaotic.

Perhaps I had better begin by saying that from the entire American Army in France, officially reported to be almost one million men, our regiment, the 28th Infantry, was the one selected to make the first attack by American troops in this war. It was the greatest honor that could have been conferred upon us and the regiment acquitted itself in the most glorious manner as you no doubt have learned from the newspaper dispatches, describing the capture and holding of the fortified town of Cantigny.

Our company was one of the as-

saulting ones and went over in two waves, one hundred yards apart. I had command of the right flank of the second wave and it was our duty to clean out ("mop up" we call it) the German trenches when the wave had passed over, then concentrate on digging in our line of defense on the far mop up those trenches. I myself killed two boche and took three prisoners—perhaps I should have killed them too, but when they came toward me with their hands up crying "Kamrad, Kamrad" I just couldn't do it.

When our second wave sighted the Boche running out of their trenches they closed up into the front wave, so as to get a better shot at the enemy (of course we couldn't shoot through our own front wave) and I had to drive our men back at the point of my pistol, so they would begin digging our trench before the enemy counter-attacked. This shows their magnificent valor—they wouldn't stay in any side of the German trenches. We did mop up those trenches. I myself killed two boche and took three prisoners—perhaps I should have killed too, but when they came toward me with their hands up crying "Kamrad, Kamrad" I just couldn't do it.

When our second wave sighted the Boche running out of their trenches they closed up into the wave, so as to get a better shot at the enemy (of course we couldn't shoot through our own front wave) and I had to drive our men back at the point of my pistol, so they would begin digging our trench before the enemy counter-attacked. This shows their magnificent valor—they wouldn't stay in any rear wave once the enemy was sighted.

After the enemy had counter-attacked three times the French said they wouldn't counter-attack any more—they never do more than three

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times—but they came on for five more times—eight times in all, in the there days, and we mowed them down and heavily repulsed them each time; and we still hold Cantigny! !

Of course we had to pay a price for all this and I lost five of my most intimate friend—three of them officers of our company. I was by the side of our captain when a shrapnel struck him and was able to catch him. A Christian gentleman and a soldier—Henry Mosher Falconer, New York, and tomorrow I shall write his sister to tell her of his heroic actions. One of his last actions was to drag a wounded private, under heavy fire, back to a place of safety. Death must have been almost instantaneous and I am glad I was there to have my old friend and captain die in my arms.

The other two officers from our company who did this glorious death were Lieut. Clarence B. Drumm, of Kansas, and Lieut. Derrickson, of Norfolk, Va., both magnificent men and like brothers of mine. We three who are left feel their loss far more keenly than I can ever say. Our consolation is, that they died the most glorious death a man can meet.

My God and your God—Our Father has heard your prayers and my prayers, and it's through His infinite mercy I am here tonight to write you.

Time after time men by my side were killed and I was knocked down five or six times by the concussion of shells but I came through without a scratch—although of course the shock has left me in a most nervous condition and I lost considerable weight during the long tour which proceeded our attack. All of this is temporary and soon when I get back to rest billets for that long deferred rest and leave, I shall quickly regain my lost weight and mental composure.

Before I close this letter I want to acknowledge my infinite gratitude to the great God, who has carried me through. If later on it should be His

will that I too, shall pass on, you will know that I die unafraid.

My greatest regret would be at leaving you, my wonderful, my beloved mother. Today I sent from Beauvois a cablegram to Warren announcing my safety as I felt sure the news of the battle would make you uneasy. It was sent through the French telegraph and so should reach him in two or three days.

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Mead, Elmo

Topeka Capital
Feb - 25 - 1918

**STOCKTON BOY PROUD
OF PRIVILEGE TO BE
AT FRONT OVER THERE**

"The more fellows one meets that have come over lately, the prouder it makes one feel that he has seen the whole thing thru, as far as the Americans have gone," writes Elmo Mead, of Stockton, Kan., to his mother. At the time the letter was written Mead had just returned to quarters from the trenches. His letter continues:

"Of course we would be tickled to death to go home, but the more we learn of the crimes and atrocities the Germans commit, the more we want to get a chance at them, with all our fighting force in action. I suppose you saw by the Rooks county paper what happened to Clyde Glimsley. Well I met him at El Paso, and we talked over Stockton times. For fear you did not see it, I enclose a clipping. I found out about him before I got the paper. I knew what happened to his company, and so I inquired. It is surely terrible.

"Do hope that Earl and Harry do not have to come until Uncle Sam is harder pressed for men than he is now. If it comes to the place where he really needs them, I know you're ready for them to go; but at present, one from our family is surely enough. If I could only see some of the people who opposed my going when I left and tell them some of the things I have learned about the Germans since I came here, I know if they've a drop of good red blood in their veins, they would come, too, if they could."

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TH Martin, C.W.

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Topeka Capital
Oct - 12 - 1918

TELLS OF MARKET PLACE.

Lieut. C. W. Martin, formerly of Topeka, but of Dade City, Fla., at the time of his enlistment, has arrived safely overseas. While in Topeka Lieutenant Martin was a member of the Kansas National Guard, and later served as corporal and sergeant in the Florida National Guard. He volunteered and was sent to the officers' training camp at Chattanooga, Tenn., where he received his commission August 27, 1917. He later was transferred to Camp Gordon, and to Camp Mills before he sailed.

In a letter home he gives some interesting bits of local color, picturing the customs of the part of France in which he is stationed. He speaks of being at the foot of large, snow-covered mountains, and of the canals that are everywhere, and the canal boats that are so common.

"I went to town the other day," he says, "and found it to be market day. Little shelters lined the streets, showing various products on sale. The mar-

common in pictures. There are women, old and young, in wooden shoes. The people come to town in small carts, drawn by a little 'rabbit' donkey and carrying in the cart calves weighing seventy and eighty pounds, sometimes four calves in a cart, and two or three persons on a seat. In the market cows, calves, sheep, goats, donkeys, geese, ducks, chickens, vegetables and many kinds of trinkets, are for sale.

"I saw a graveyard at La Courteine. The graves were fenced with pretty little fences of wire and stone, the whole enclosed by a high, stone wall. Each grave is laid over with stone slabs, and on the 'petit' fences are hung bright-

colored garlands of flowers made of strung beads, the most artistic work I have ever seen. There are also flowers made of a hard substance, so real appearing that I had to feel them to assure myself that they were artificial. When the sun strikes the red, green and blue of the flowers, it is the most beautiful sight I have ever seen."

Lieutenant Martin has been receiving training in installing telephones to the front-line trenches.



LIEUT. C. W. MARTIN.

Former Topeka Man Installing Telephones in France.

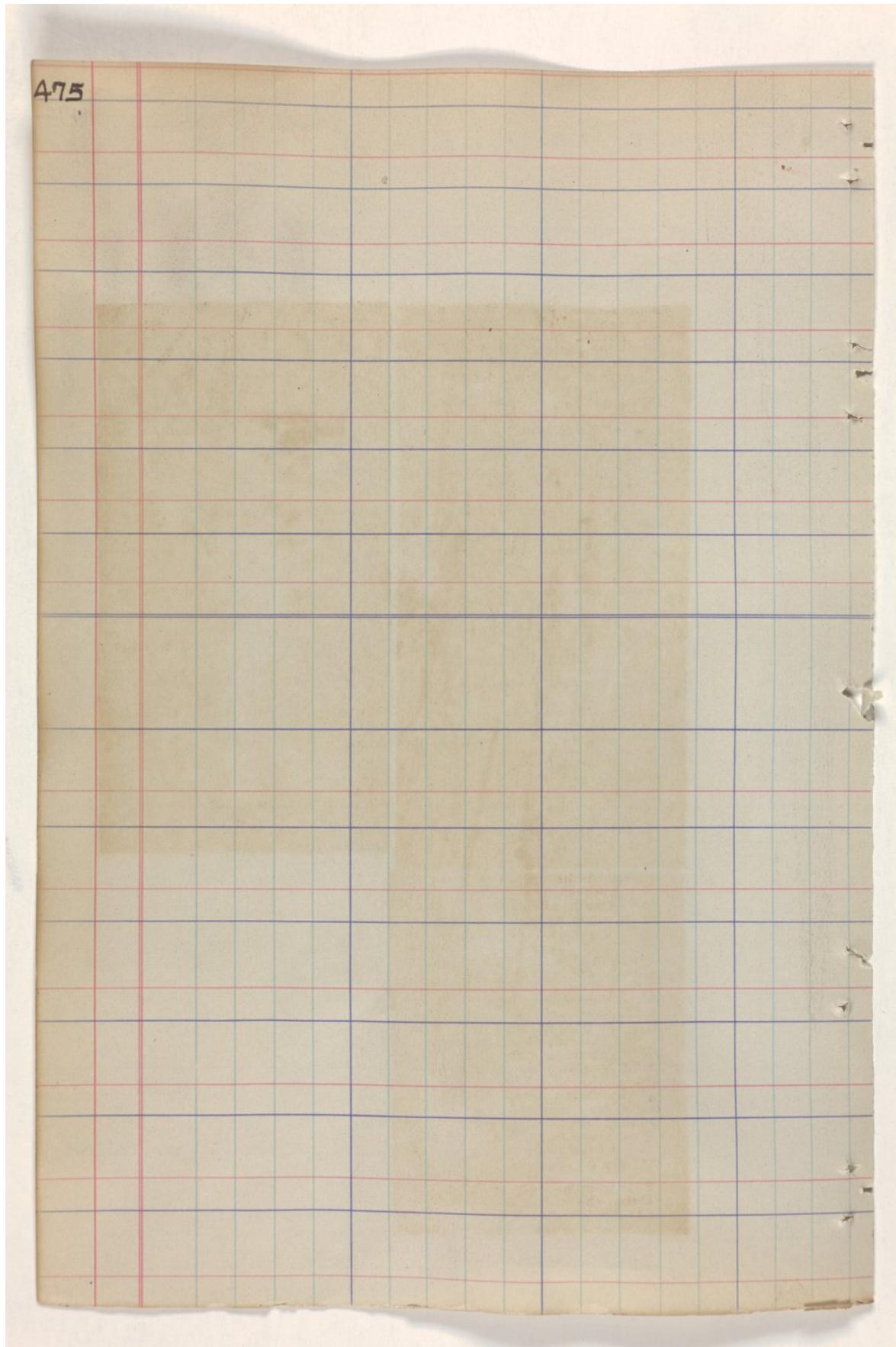
ket day comes bi-monthly, and the people flock from all the countryside. Shepherds, with their sheep to sell, are about the streets. The shepherds are dressed in the long, white smocks so

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Mead, Lakin

Topexa Journal

Aug 14 - 1918

Lakin Meade, who is somewhere in France, sent the following clipping entitled, "Paris Contrasts," from a Paris paper to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Meade, because he said it was so characteristic of the people over there.

"Paris in her summer gown of green and blue is rejoicing in a succession of perfect days. Every tall tree is in full green leaf, whereof the sun makes shimmering patterns of cool grey on the white pavements.

"A breeze passing down the boulevards brings great content. Veterans of a dozen campaigns sit outside the Cafe de la Paix, which in a passion for renaming should surely become de la Guerre. Bronzed men in uniforms of meridian blue or yellow as desert sands sit and drink colored drinks thru straws, watching dainty women like bubbles streaming upwards thru the grass, as they pass down the boulevard. In the kiosk the paper seller leans quietly back and surveys a world contented and at peace with itself.

"And the boche is forty miles away.

"On the little stage the curtain goes up to a crowded house at the sound of three wooden raps. A roar of merriment greets the scene.

"Filling one-half of the stage is the giant figure of a French nurse maid. Her ox-eyes roll upward and down, her head inclines to the right and left again, and rocking on her ample lap lies the chief comedian, dressed a la bebe, in an infant's gown tied round with blue ribbons. Backwards and forwards he goes, wailing infant-like and unheeded, and pouring out a steady stream of mirth provoking comment upon nurses and babies.

"In a gigantic high chair on the other side of the stage sits an older 'infant' contentedly playing with a mammoth wooden reel. The eyes of the nurse close and her head droops in sleep, the rocking ceases and down slips the baby on the floor, there to carry on an interchange of witty cross-talk with his older brother, beginning with an offer to swap his yard or more of boot-lace for the other's cotton-reel.

"In the stalls the tall soldiers laugh consumedly.

"And before the last curtain drops the sirens are screaming their warning to the dark night that enemy aeroplanes are on their way to Paris.

"Twenty miles from Paris.
"Across the hilltop the clean breeze is blowing over the forests of green trees. By twos and fours the players

walk from the club to the tee and drive long and straight down the grassy slope towards the first green. as they walk they talk of the beauty of the day, the glory of wood and scenery around, and speculate on the condition of the greens after a week of fiery sunshine.

"The little 'cadets' plod round with the players, talking as caddies talk everywhere of the game and the score, and offering sage advice to the amateur who has not touched a club for three years."

"Men who have been busy keeping the wheels of the war going round are here with soldiers just down from the front, but they leave the war to run itself on this glorious day in July, and they, too, talk of the game and the handicap, perchance of the lunch which will be earned by midday, and the long, cool drink at four.

"And down in the little railway valley below the black smoke of the engine betrays a train, carrying lithe young men in blue perched upon guns and sitting in the open doors of horse boxes, swinging their legs to the air as you have seen them many a time and oft, on and ever onward to the battle front.

"France has passed the day when sentiment forbade the playing of golf, the laughter of a theater or the sipping of cool drinks on the boulevard. These things are of life and the war is of life, and we are all in it. But there is no need to say so or even think so every minute of the day."

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Meirer, E.W.

Kansas City Star
Oct-11- 1918

COULD TELL DIRECTION OF SHELLS.

But When They Came Closer a French Sergeant Had Other Duties.

Sergt. C. W. Meirer, with a United States field artillery unit in France, writes to his wife, 2952 Hutchins Avenue, Kansas City:

There is always plenty of excitement up here in the mountains. It seems the boche will wait until everything is quiet and then open up on us with a few "Big Berthas," and we always hand back just a few more than he sends, only never sufficient to suit us.

With a gun crew the other day we were all standing around my gun wishing for something to happen to liven up things a bit. Each was telling what he would do if Jerry opened up on us, when we were joined by a little French sergeant from the battery next to us who has been in this game over three years. He could speak fairly good English and was kept busy answering questions. He told us that he could tell by the whistling sound of Jerry's shell just where they would land. When the shells came close to us the sergeant left to write a letter, he said.

We were all laughing about what he said and the way he said it, when Jerry sent another, and, according to the Frenchman's dope, it was coming toward us. I never will forget that first shell. Our dugouts are about ten feet away from my gun and have very small entrances. I have not had time to figure it out, but we all got into them at the same time and stayed until the bombardment was over. Jerry didn't shoot close enough to do any damage, but the noise was terrifying and we thought our time had come.