

Kansas Memory



Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

Section 26, Pages 751 - 776

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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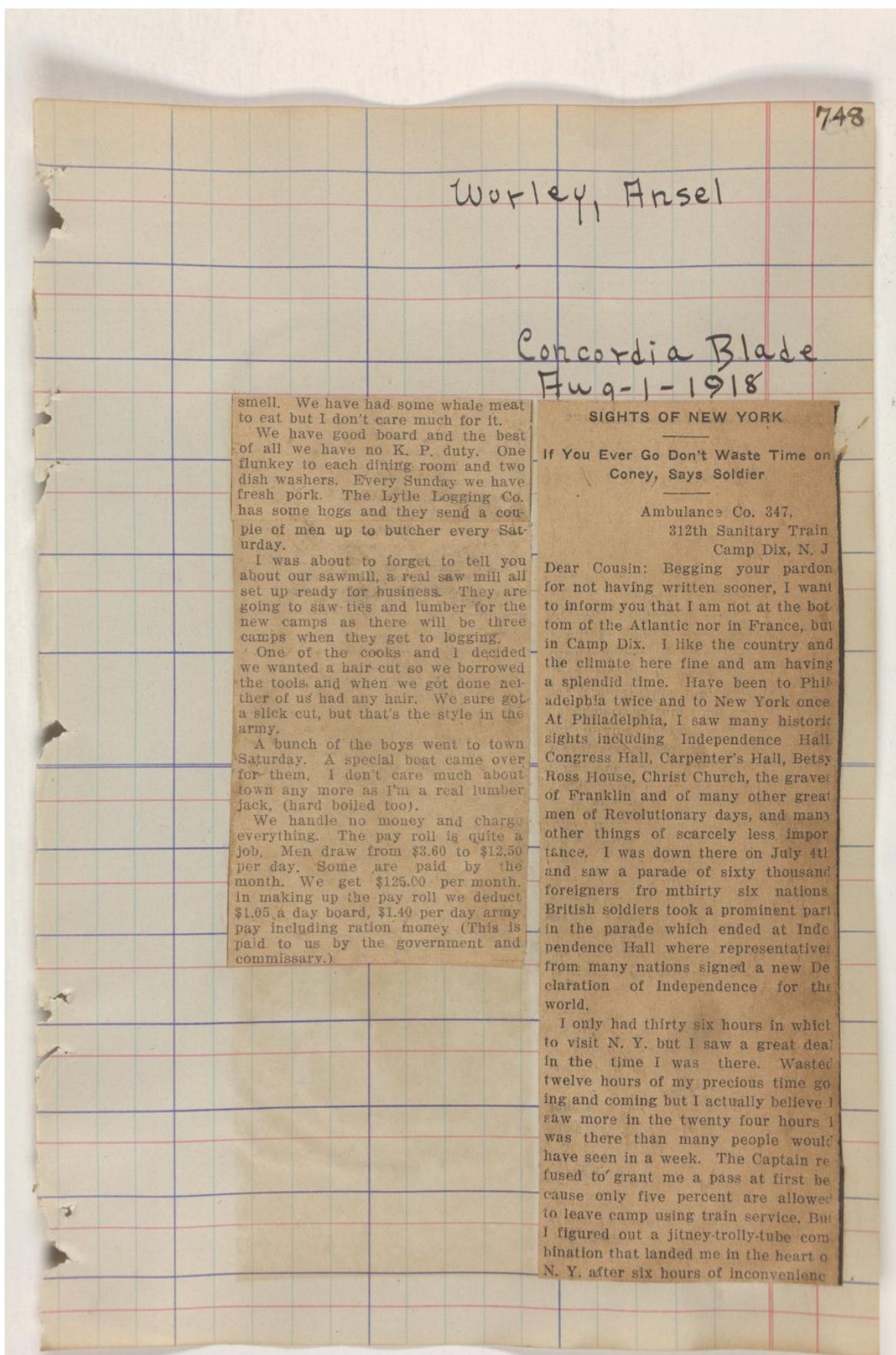
KANSAS
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Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers



Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

749

which in no way impaired my zest and interest. I had no sooner gotten off the trolley at Newark than a man, who was taking a tube to N. Y. took me under his wing. He pointed out many places of interest to me, showing me through the Penn Station and the Grand Central Station, explaining how to find certain districts—the Bowery, the Ghettos, Chinatown, Fifth Ave., the skyscrapers, and gave me some good advice about looking after my pocket book when associating with certain disreputable characters whom he doubtless thought that I in my ignorance, enthusiasm and curiosity might be tempted to associate with. This was very kind of him; but the advice was scarcely needed; for while I doubtless have all the attributes he credited me with, I also have a considerable degree of prudence, and my early moral training was not neglected.

Wait—where am I? I started to say something about N. Y. The thing that impressed me most was the view from the Woolworth building. All Manhattan Island lay below me like a child's relief map made of sand. Across the East River at Brooklyn, reached by the three great suspension bridges, the Brooklyn, the Manhattan, and the Williamsburg, each greater and each further up the river in the order named. To the north, across the Hudson on North River lay Jersey City and Hoboken which communicate with Manhattan only by ferry or by tubes under the river. Several miles to the northeast and flowing into the East River, I could see the Harlan River which cuts Manhattan Island off from the mainland. To the south lay the harbor with Governor's Island, Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty in plain view. From my elevation of almost eight hundred feet the thirty story skyscrapers looked small, and the half mile to the rivers on either side of me

and the harbor in front, looked like a hundred yards. As far as the eye could see up both rivers and along the harbor were docks for monstrous ships. Over in Hoboken lay the Leviathan which can carry seventeen thousand troops.

You can imagine the size of the Woolworth building when I tell you it houses a population twice as great as that of Concordia—twelve thousand people are employed in it. In ascending I went up fifty four stories in one elevator, then took a smaller elevator and went on up to the observation platform.

On the Riverside Drive I saw several great churches and some of the finest residences including Mayor Mitchells, Chas. M. Schwabs and Vanderbilts. There were more trees and green grass than I thought existed in N. Y. and the outlook across the Hudson to the Palisades on the other side was beautiful. I only went out to one hundred and ninety second street.

About twelve o'clock at night I started over to the Bowery and Chinatown but a sour-faced conductor to whom I confided my purpose informed me that there was "nothin' doin' over there at this time of night," and gave the further information that N. Y. is "gittin' to be a regular church town."

I went over to Coney Island. Yes, on Sunday. It was the only time I had to go. Take my advice and if you ever go to N. Y. don't waste your time at Coney Island.

As I haven't much more to say now, and another man would like to use this pen, I will close.

Your Cousin,
ANSEL WORLEY

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

750

Wray, James A.

Topeka Journal Topeka Journal
Nov - 2 - 1918 Aug - 10 - 1918

An interesting letter from Corp. J. A. Wray of the 82nd Company, Sixth regiment United States marines, has been received in which he tells his parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Wray, 390 Poplar street, that he has had a meal at the expense of the German government. The letter follows:

"Dear Mother and Father: We are back behind the line again resting after our new drive. I received several letters after we got back in camp. I wish we had had a part of your dry weather here and also a part of the hot at night. It rains nearly every day and is quite cold at night. I will tell you something of our last drive.

TOPEKAN IN FIGHTING

J. A. Wray Tells of War Right Up in Front Line Trenches.

Mr. and Mrs. James Wray of 390 Poplar street, have received a letter from their son, J. A. Wray, of the 82nd company, 6th regiment, United States marines. He enlisted in the marine service May 8, 1917, and is now on the battle line.



Corp. J. A. Wray of the U. S. Marines.

We were several nights on our way to the front, arriving just behind the line at midnight. Our barrage opened up at 1 o'clock and kept up for twelve hours. We started over after the Huns at daybreak. They didn't stop to fight, and we drove them back so fast they didn't have time to eat a meal some of them were preparing, and I had a warm dinner on the kaiser. This was in a little town five miles behind their lines. I don't know what the dish was, but it was in a pot on the stove and was good, also had some pickles and artificial honey. They are using roasted wheat as a substitute for coffee, but didn't try any of it. Am sending you some of their money in this letter.



J. A. Wray.

A letter dated July 1, to his parents, says, in part: "This is the first time I have had in which I could write a letter for more than a month, tho I have sent you some trench postcards. For weeks we have been in the thick of it. You have probably read more of what we have been doing than I would be allowed to tell you in a letter. I thought we were in the war when we were on the other front, but that was a picnic compared to this. With shells bursting all around us by the hundreds, it seems almost impossible that they can miss any of us. We had no bomb proof dugouts, and each man, or two men, dug holes large enough to crawl into and lie down. Just now we are camped out in the woods a short distance behind the lines, I am feeling fine and had no trouble getting back to my company after being in the hospital."

"My writing paper is issued by the Y. M. C. A., and the supply is small. When I get more paper I shall write

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

751

to the boys.

"I wish I could be with you and get some of your strawberries. There are a few wild ones here, but they are the smallest ones I have ever seen. I picked half a cupful of them last week when I was at the front, put some sugar and water on them and felt that I was living high."

"I saw an air fight last week between a French and a German machine. Only a few shots were exchanged, when the German came tumbling straight down, turning over and over. The French machine must have been hit, too, as it burst into flames which streamed out like the tail of a comet. The Frenchman made a cork-screw descent and landed safely."

"I should like very much to have a box from home, but I won't ask for a written order for one yet. I hope shipping room will be more plentiful soon, and that you can send me another package. I will write you every chance I get. That you keep well and cheerful is all I ask."

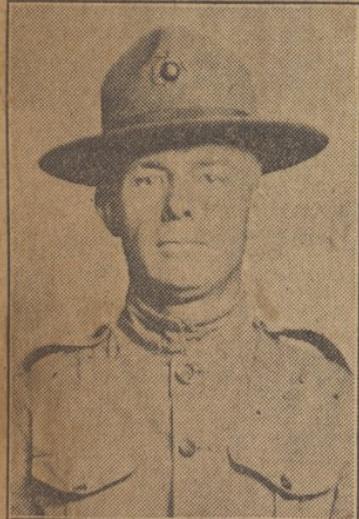
for several days. Corp. J. A. Wray, son of Mr. and Mrs. James M. Wray, of 390 Poplar street, tells of such a "run" in a letter recently received by his parents. A portion of his letter reads as follows:

"A great number of the tanks took part in the drive where the open country permitted. I don't blame anyone for running when one of those things comes towards him spitting fire. They can travel pretty fast too, but have to stop when they come to a wood. We passed thru a very large and beautiful forest on our way to the front, part of which was held by the Huns. The forest was mostly beach trees with no lower limbs and no underbrush, but after our barrage the ground was covered with fallen trees and limbs, which made it hard to get thru. After leaving the wood our lines advanced a mile or more thru wheat fields. The wheat was waist high and ready to harvest. Looked like a fine crop. It didn't offer much protection from shell fire tho."

Mr. Wray has been in the front line trenches off and on since last March and has seen some severe fighting. He was one of the marines which aided in the capture of Belleau wood last June. Practically all of the officers in his company have been killed or wounded in the fighting since June.

Topeka Capital
Oct-20-1918

The Germans in retreat run so fast that in order to keep up with them



CORP. J. A. WRAY.

Topeka Boy Tells of Chasing Huns.

our boys often find it necessary to go without sleep and with little to eat

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

752

Wright, Montgomery
Wright, Rowland E

Kansas City Star Kansas City Star
Dec-15-1918 Nov-4-1918

BELIEVED ARMISTICE A JOKE.

The Men at the Front Couldn't Believe It, Soldier Writes.

Corp. Montgomery Wright, 355th Ambulance Company, 88th Division, writes: An ambulance driver just stuck his head in the door and said: "They just picked up an unofficial rumor at the wireless station with the artillery back of us that an armistice has been signed and will take effect at 11 o'clock."

"I suppose those are giant firecrackers they are shooting to celebrate peace," the battalion aid said.

Some fellow bet ten francs the news was not true. Most of us just hoped silently and ate our bacon. A little later we heard the doughboys cheering. Then a wild Western war cry came from another outfit on another hill. One of our men ran down from the wireless station too much out of breath to talk, but he did not need to—anyone could see it in his face.

The barrage, which had not slackened noticeably all morning, stopped short at 11 o'clock. Another chance for a dramatic scene, but the situation was too big for us. We looked at each other and said in good Yankee French: "Oh, boy! La guerre is fineeshed!"

SOLDIER LETTERS.

WOUNDED WHILE HE SLEPT.

And When His Partner Awoke Both Legs Were Gone.

Rowland E. Wright, tank corps, in a letter to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence C. Wright, 3637 Broadway, states he has been wounded. Wright is 20 years old and worked for the Smith-McCord-Townsend Company. He has a brother, Clarence C. Wright, with the Rainbow Division in France.

We landed near the front at about 11 in the evening. It was difficult unloading heavy tanks in the pouring rain. When we finished unloading we drove the tanks seven kilometers. The roads were so crowded with ammunition, artillery and supply trains it took us over two hours, and by the time we were supplied with gasoline and oiled up it was time to start over the top. The ground behind No Man's Land was so full of shell holes from the barrage of the night before and the holes were so muddy from the rain that only about one-half of our tanks got through, but the other half went on and did their work like veterans.

I was acting as reserve driver, so had to go over the top with the doughboys. I started out without rifle, rations or any arms except a trench knife. We almost had to run to keep up with the Huns, but kept on their heels all day.

One night we had our tank in the woods and fixed our bed beside it for a night's rest. We thought we were pretty well protected from gas and shrapnel, as we were at the bottom of a hill and the German artillery was on the other side. We went to sleep side by side under the same blanket. When I awoke my partner had no legs and one of mine was wound up in a knot and the gas was so thick we could not breathe. I crawled over and dragged him out of the shell hole. Help came and they carried him to a first aid station and fixed him up. I was finally gotten there with the help of two stretcher bearers. The shell hit right at his feet. He got all of the shell and I got my share of something. I don't know what it was that hit me, but it surely hit hard. I am at the base hospital and not badly wounded.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

753

Wyman, Byron

Kansas City Star Topeka Capital
May 3-1918 May 5-1918

SOLDIER LETTERS.

BIG GUN SHELLS ARE WEAK

THICK COVERINGS NECESSITATE
SMALL EXPLOSIVE CHARGE.

Parisians Live in South Side of Homes
for Protection, as Shells Come
From North, Kansan
Writes.

Anent the long distance shelling of Paris,
Byron Wyman of Chase County, Kansas,
at the base censor's office in Paris,
writes:

The long range guns have not done
much damage, as it stands to reason.
they have to have a very heavy cover-
ing on the shells fired and not much of
an explosion occurs. If these shells did
contain very much explosive matter they
would be discharged in the shooting.

When these shells hit they make a
hole only about one or two yards square,
and so far only a few people have been
killed. However, the people of the city
now stay on the south side of their
houses, as the shells come from the
north side. In that way one can protect
himself pretty well.

WRITES OF BIG GUN

Kansan in Paris Tells Interesting Story of Shelling.

Cottonwood Falls, May 1. — Byron Wyman, a Chase county boy with the American expeditionary force in France, who is now in Paris with the base censor's office, writes interestingly of the bombardment of that city by the long-range guns of the Germans.

The letter was written March 24, soon after the Germans began throwing shells into the French capital.

"I have some very interesting news to tell you and I wouldn't blame you much if you did not believe it, nevertheless it is true. We are sitting in the office working and bombs, or rather shells, are dropping around nearly all the time, at about ten-minute intervals.

"The fact is, Germany has a gun that shoots seventy-five miles and is shooting into Paris since early Saturday morning.

"There are all sorts of rumors afloat about it, so I'll inclose what the newspapers say. It's all very true, as the bombs are continually lighting here and there, and they must be from a gun, as they all hit the buildings sideways and go straight in. They cannot be dropped by aircraft.

"We have had air raids the last three nights, too, and have been forced to walk home from the 'Y.' So far the German airmen have not been able to get over Paris and drop bombs. Neither have the long-range guns done much damage as it stands to reason that they have to have a very heavy covering on the shells and not much explosion occurs. If these shells did contain very much explosive matter they would be discharged in the shooting.

"When these shells hit they make a hole only about one or two yards square and so far only a few people have been killed. However, the people of the city now stay on the south side of their houses as the shells come from the north side. In that way one can pretty well protect himself."

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

754

Yandell, Donald

Dodge City Globe
Dec-24-1918

Corporal Donald Yandell, in a Fathers' Day letter to his father, W. Yandell, tells some uncensored news about his experiences in France. He says he went over on the transport America with two other Dodge boys, Foree Hobble and Harold Balderston, and landed at Brest, going to La Courtil for machine gun training. He successively was stationed at La Courtine, Bordeaux, Cagaux, Nantes, Toul and at present is located near Metz. He speaks of meeting Clifford Teeter, another Dodge boy, who is in the 35th division. Don tells of being made a corporal a few weeks ago, but says he had been an acting corporal for the past six months.

The letter:

Near Metz.
November 24, 1918.

Dear Dad:—

Today is Dad's day over here in the A. E. F. and everybody is writing to dear old Dad. It begins to look like Dad was coming into his own. You hear a lot about mother and Mother's Dad, but somehow you never hear much about Dad except around the first of the month when all the bills are due. Maybe that is the reason we are having Dad's Day over here in the A. E. F.. All the boys know they will soon be home and they are depending on Dad to furnish them up with the dry goods when they pull their O. D.'s off for the last time. Uncle Sam furnishes very good clothes but he has the very grave fault of being very set in his ideas of dress and he does not change his styles often enough to suit the average American boy. So perhaps these Dad's Day's letters are forerunners to let Dad know that his pocketbook will receive an awful blow when the boys come home and march down to the tailor shop and get measured up for a good old civilian uniform. I don't know how much of your furniture the tailor will take to satisfy his bills, but I know one thing that old proverb about being eaten out of house and home will nearly come true when I start in. Uncle Sam also feeds us very

good, but he is very careful that we do not eat too much sweet stuff and ruin our stomachs. So when I set my hobnails under mother's table once more, the pies and cakes and everything that goes along that line had better look, cause I am sure going to make up for lost time.

I suppose you heard about the death of old man Censor, we can write most anything we please now as the war is over.

At present I am on the front, or where the front used to be before the armistice was signed and the Germans withdrew. I got up here a little too late to see much action, but I have seen a plenty of what has happened. We are billeted in German buildings and dugouts. The buildings are situated in a deep ravine among thick under brush and trees. A person would never guess they were there unless he happened to stumble upon them. The Germans pulled out of here in a hurry and left us a good deal of their equipment. We have stoves, chairs, mirrors, beds galore, and a good many other things. And the best part of it is that it is all at the Germans expense. I don't know how long we will stay here. We may go on to Germany or we may go back and pull out for the States soon. I don't care much which. I'd like to go on into Germany and I'd like to go back to the States. At present we are in the Second army and if we are not transferred to the 3rd army I will probably be home soon.

I suppose you folks wonder where I have been since coming to France. I came over on the America an Italian ship with Hobble and Balderson. We landed at Brest and from there the 12, Hobble is in the 10th, and the 25th went to La Courtine for training. The 12th pulled out for the front about two months after we were there. I went away to a machine gun school near Bordeaux where I took the Hotchkiss M. G. From there I went to Cagoux about 50 miles southwest of Bordeaux, from there I went to a U. S. ordnance school near Nantes and

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

755

Yaples, Claude

Hutchinson News
July 16-1918

Took up the light Browning machine rifle and from there back to La Courtine. You will find La Courtine in south central France in the Province of Creuse. When the company left La Courtine, we went by train to Toul and from there in trenches. I don't know just exactly where we are now but we are not far from Metz.

I ran across Cliff Teeters the other day who is in the 35th division. He said the Dodge M. P.'s were at St. Mihiel.

Did mother receive the handkerchief and George the wooden shoes I sent them?

I must close wishing you all a very merry merry Christmas. Your son,

DON.

Corporal Donald A. Yandell.
25th Balloon Co. A. E. F.

P. S.—I was made corporal about a week ago, but it is no new job for me as I have been an acting corporal for nearly six months.

Fields Are Pretty.

Claude Yaples writes an interesting letter from France to his parents who live at Arlington. He was formerly a student in the Reno County high school. He says the fields are dotted with red poppies and yellow mustard flowers, which makes it very pretty. His letter follows:

June 14, 1918.

Dear Folks at home:

A fellow loaned me his fountain pen so I will write a real letter for once. It has been more than a week since I wrote you last but I either haven't had time or have been too lazy. As long as you don't hear from me, just consider me as being well and happy. When I get sick or wounded I will have more time to write and you will get more letters. The main thing is, don't worry about me. I am healthy and have a strong constitution, and if I should get sick or injured I will come out on top. The Germans can't kill me.

I don't think I have received a letter from home since I wrote last.

I am glad to hear that the wheat is looking good. It looked like there were good chances for a crop in all the states we went through last spring.

Changed Locations.

We are not in the same part of the country that we were at first. We had some hard hiking and had a trip on a train last week. Those box cars looked as good to us hikers as a feather bed would to a bum, when we found the railroad. I think we hiked about twenty-five miles one day, and that over hard rock road with loose crushed rock on top. It was the hardest hiking our bunch ever had, but we came out singing. I expect we could hike clear to Berlin without stopping.

We have seen much more of the pretty part of France since we left our former location. There are very few fields with more than an acre in them. Some hay fields are red with poppies and some oats fields are yellow with mustard, so when you get on a hill the country looks like a many colored checker board.

I guess this is the country where the idea of merry haymakers originated, for everybody works in the hay field—women, kids, girls, and old men. A family just went by with a team of oxen hitched to the hay

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

756.
Youngberg, Chester

Young, Otis L

Topeka Capital
Dec-29-1918

wagon. They were going after a load of hay and three or four of our fellows were going along to help. Most of the country people wear wooden shoes over here.

It is getting too dark to write any more tonight, so I will say goodbye until next time. Love to all,

CLAUDE YAPLE.

Otis L. Young, of the ambulance corps, Thirty-fifth division, who has been doing guard duty for the gassed and wounded soldiers in many of the recent drives writes of the St. Mihiel and Argonne forest battles. His letter in part follows:

"We left Bremnes for the front, St. Mihiel and Argonne, Labor day. Have been here for over a month, without change of clothes or a bath, little sleep in the trenches and many days only hardtack to eat. Was in Toul sector, battle of St. Mihiel and now in the Verdun sector, and battle of Argonne, hardest point of the line and hardest battle. I have two machine gun bullets and shrapnel that missed me by a small margin. It makes my blood boil to see my comrades, you might say my own flesh and blood, being sliced and torn to pieces, flying in the air, and you couldn't identify many of them. I was sure lucky, if you call it lucky to be here today, with only a little gas and a bruised hand, but I am out of danger.

Gets Seven Prisoners.

"I marched in seven prisoners with my gat, and a Y. M. C. A. man saw me and gave me seven packages of chocolate and seven packages of cakes, which I gave to the wounded. I was under fire, dressing wounded that lay moaning all around me and bringing them in, when I saw Dan Hart, Harry Davis and eleven boys from near home. They are all some fighters."

"Just saw Mr. Rodeheaver 'Billy' Sunday's old singer, go by laughing and playing a jewsharp."

"After coming from the front they gave us a fifteen-day furlough. We came to Paris and stayed over night, and then to Macon where a corporal and myself were guests at the beautiful country home, in the hills, of a French captain and his wife. They have two lovely little girls. We visited an old-fashioned flour mill, in the vicinity where Napoleon's mother was drowned. We have an invitation to return for the Christmas holidays."

Wants a Home Bath.

"Had my second trench bath. Oh, yes, when I get home have some Gold Dust ready for me, for I'll need a bath. I've got cootie bites all over me. With bushels of love and all its trimmings, pray for peace and the fourth loan. Your Yankee Lad."

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

757

Zartman, O. B.

Topeka Journal
Sept. 24-1917

SOLDIERS LIKE TOPEKA

Letter to Home Paper Indicates Appreciation of Hospitality.

The current issue of the Chetopa Clipper contains a letter from Sergeant Zartman of the Supply company, First Kansas field artillery, in which he gives the spirit of appreciation of the soldiers encamped here in respect to the hospitality of the people of Topeka.

The letter follows:

Topeka, Kan., Sept. 10, 1917.
Editor Clipper, Chetopa, Kan.
Dear Friend R. J.: As per agreement before the Chetopa boys left for Topeka I will now give you my experiences of camp life as I have found it so far. Of course this experience is not altogether new to me as I was out in the Spanish American war and am a "vet" already. We have a dandy little company here with Capt. T. A. Mayhew in command and Lieut. Benjamin H. Porter very ably assistant. The regimental supply Sergeants are Marion Halsey and James Whitakers. First Sergt. Frank Houck and mess Sergt. O. B. Zartman. Wm. McAnliffe has been appointed corporal. The boys are all making good as soldiers and all may be expected to render a good account of themselves in any eventuality. We drill every day and go on hikes to the various parks of the city, and practice signaling and all the things pertaining to actual warfare. Through the kindness of the school board of Topeka we have been very nicely quartered in the Van Buren school basement. Some folks not familiar with basements might get the idea that the basement is a place for coal and all kinds of refuse. In this case it is large, airy modern rooms where they teach domestic science and manual training. Yesterday, Sunday, September 9, the good women of Topeka vied with each other to see how many good things they could bring for a spread for all the soldiers here at Gage's park. The street car company furnished the transportation for the soldiers and they had "some" day believe me. It would have done a Methodist minister good to have been here and seen the display of chicken, cakes, pies and fruits, salads and other things too numerous to mention. But I will say this, the Topeka women and men too are all right and there was not a soldier at the park but had all be wanted of the good things of life. There was plenty of chicken, of another variety also and as a rule a soldier or sailor has a sweetheart in every port and most of the soldiers were stepping out with some chicken. In closing I will say we will ever hold in our hearts fond memories of the good will and kindness of the Topeka men and women.

Cordially yours,

O. B. ZARTMAN.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

758

Ziegler, H. F.

Kansas City Star Kansas City Star

Nov. 7-1918 Feb 2-1919

THE 128TH NOT IN BIG DRIVE.

H. F. Ziegler Writes His Unit Was Held in Reserve.

H. F. Ziegler was in the produce business at 406 Walnut Street when he enlisted. As a member of the 128th Field Artillery, 35th Division, he writes from France.

We were in reserve in the St. Mihiel drive, but did not see action. We moved on toward Verdun stopping about twenty miles southwest of that town. With one day's rest we moved into position. All the cooks and men with rolling kitchens went up with the battery. It was all new to us and we did not mind the shells which burst near us while we waited from midnight to 5 o'clock in the morning for the battery men to eat. Directly below our hill were placed several big naval guns, 14-inch, and before the big drive was started we had to move. During that night our guns kept up a constant roar. The next morning they were out of reach and had to move forward. From then on I had a difficult time getting food to the battery. They had to keep moving ahead, and traffic on roads was so great that wagons were detoured over bad roads.

We are at a rest camp in a town a little larger than Independence, Mo.

Tells of 128th in the Argonne Battle.

Verdun, France—*To The Star*: I desire to correct an article headed "The 128th Not in Big Drive," which appeared in *The Star* in October. It has caused many complaints, since the headline gives the impression the Argonne drive was meant. Many of the home folks have written to ascertain the truth.

It is true we were in reserve in the St. Mihiel drive. Yet our gun positions were picked. That was done quickly under the direction of Maj. D. F. Jones and Capt. L. L. Bucklew. Only one slight casualty occurred in our battery, although several other batteries suffered heavier losses.

At 5:30 o'clock the morning of September 12 our battalion of 75s began a barrage on the German front line trenches. Many artillery brigades participated in that barrage. It was constant and hellish in its roaring and thundering. We waited at march order in the rain all night. The order to move did not come.

We did participate in one of the world's greatest drives—the battle of Argonne Forest—which General Pershing had planned to begin September 26. According to his plans, we were brought up close to our sector under cover and at night. We went into position under shell fire near Neuville on the night of September 23. The barrage was lifted after an hour's fighting. The barriers had been broken and at 6:30 o'clock the doughboys went over the top on their successful advance.

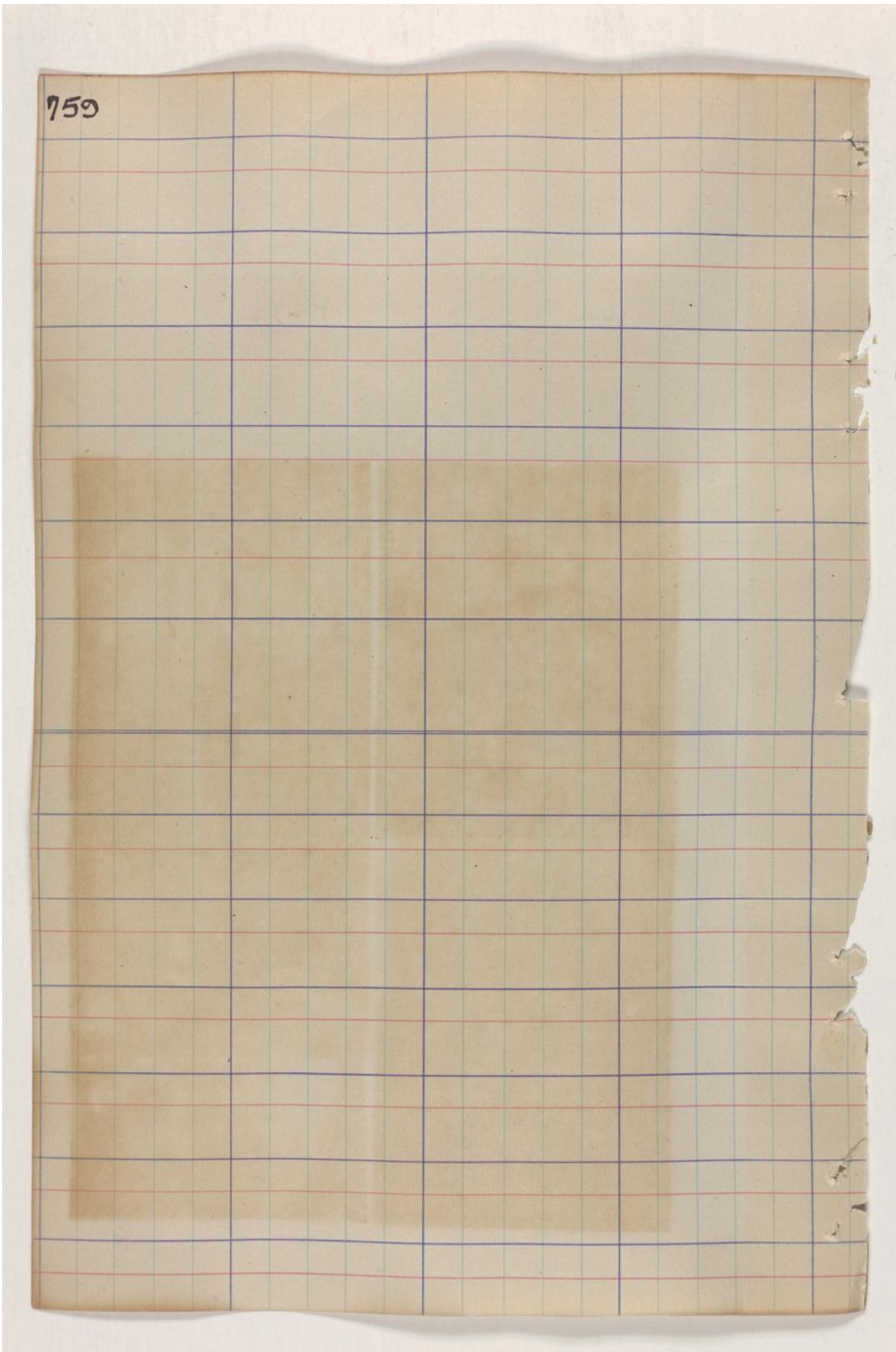
SERGT. H. F. ZIEGLER,
Battery E, 128th Field Artillery, 35th Division.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers



Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

760

Soldier Letters [Anonymous]

Modate.

THE GOOD OLD U. S. A.

After Lots of Travel Soldier Says He Likes Home Land Best

Somewhere Over There
Dear Wife and Babe:—

Well, I will try and write you a few lines this eve to let you know that I am feeling fine and dandy and hope you are the same.

I would have written to you sooner but didn't have time as have been pretty busy the past few days, so will try and make up for it now.

This sure is a pretty country over here and some of the prettiest dwelling places I ever have seen and the most flowers I have ever seen and we have been treated fine by the civilians, but it isn't like the good old U. S. A. and nothing that I've seen yet can no where near come'up with her. We have been doing a lot of traveling around since we landed and since we have been here, have marched around over the country some but that walking don't appeal to me in the least as I'd lots rather be settled in a candle but then one can't always be choosers so will take what comes and try and smile.

Well, how is every one at home? I haven't heard from any of you yet but expect to in the near future at least I hope I do as it has been almost a month since I've heard a word but we can't expect very prompt delivery when the mail has so far to go is our does. I expect by the time you

get this everybody will be busy in the harvest fields but me and I'll have just as important a job as any one. The rations here are fair. Of course we don't live on pie and cake, but what we do get is solid food like hard bread, potatoes, cheese, meat and coffee and sometimes rice pudding so guess we can get along all right at least, the rest of the boys are, so I'll leave to. Ha! Ha!

The crops here look good, in fact there is lots more grain raised than I imagined possible but the more the merrier as the sooner its over the sooner I'll get back home to you.

There are Y. M. C. A.'s in every camp over here and they sell tobacco's, cigarettes, soft drinks and so on besides having a place for us to set down and write or read. I'll tell you they are a big help to us boys as it makes a nice place to spend the evenings, also to spend our money. Ha! Ha!

And an American dollar makes a whole pocket full of this kind of money here. I thought I was nearly broke but I've got so much that I have to put some in both pockets to balance me or I'd soon be one sided.

How is every one up there now?

Have you seen or heard anything of mother lately. I don't think that I'll write to her tonight but will in a day or two, o you can tell her how I am and that way both hear and save me writing as I am getting lazier every day. I don't think that I'll be here in this camp long but that won't

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

761

Topeka Capital
Dec-31-1917

change my address any and I'll get to see some more country too. I have not seen any of the boys from up round there yet but I want to if I can. Say, kid, could you get Skum De Raff's address from his folks and send it to me. I'd like to write to him once in a while and see how he is getting along. I wrote to Arthur and Della the other day to let them know that I'm safely landed. Well, I have just about run down. Tell all the folks hello for me. Will write again soon.

Will close as ever your loving husband,

HARLEY.

Cat. 'E', 340th F. A.
A. & E. F., via New York.

NEW YORK CAPTURED BY HUNS, WEST FRONT TALK

German Soldiers Despair of Victory and Believe War Will End In a Year.

Junction City, Dec. 30.—(Special)—New York has been captured by the Germans and the handful of American soldiers in France are all in Paris. These are some of the impressions prevailing among the Germans on the western front, according to a letter received by a national army man at Camp Funston from his brother, a physician stationed just back of the fighting line in France.

The writer served thru the Cambrai fighting and during the German counter attacks which followed the allied gains in that area. He writes that as nearly as can be estimated the Germans lost 100,000 men within a short time in their efforts to regain lost ground around Cambrai.

The writer states that in treating German wounded who had been given first aid treatment by their own doctors prior to their capture, it was found that only paper bandages were being used, an indication of the scarcity of linens in Germany. The "synthetic" bandages were made of a species of crepe paper.

While treating two of the German soldiers, the American doctor observed them looking at him in a curious manner.

"I am an American," he explained, answering their unvoiced questions.

The soldiers expressed great surprise and informed the physician that it had been the general understanding along their section of the front that the few Americans in France were all in Paris. Further conversation brought out the interesting fact that the German soldiers had also been told New York was in the hands of the Germans, altho the manner of its capture was not disclosed.

From other German soldiers and officers captured during the Cambrai activities it was learned that the Teutons themselves despaired of victory and did not think that Germany could hold out against her enemies for more than a year longer.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

762

Newton Journal
Jan. 11 - 1918

LETTER FROM CAMP PIKE

Camp Pike, Ark., Jan. 6, 1918

Dear Folks:

Although there is intense activity here it is not always easy to pick out of the routine, events that will interest folks 500 miles away.

However, we had two events last week that were of more than passing interest. One was the visit of Harry Lauder to camp, and the other was the lecture to our company by a French lieutenant.

Lauder got an audience that crammed the big Y. M. auditorium by a courier announcement from barrack to barrack an hour before he was to come out. He taught us the chorus of his new marching song, the words of which run thus:

"From the north and the south and the east and the west
A-marching with the President, we'll never, never rest;
We're going to do our very, very, very, very best,
From the north, south, east and west."

He also taught us the chorus of another song that will be popular among the soldiers, a Scotch song. He was attired in native costume, with the bare knees--a short, stocky, smiley man, well suited to Scotch garb.

He has the ability to keep his audience "with him" in everything he does and says. His entertainment although nearly the same as Little Rockpeople paid \$2.00 a seat to hear that evening, was gratis to the soldiers. He closed with as fine a patriotic appeal as I have yet heard. His only son was killed on the western front a year ago, and Lauder said that when he had recovered from the first shock of his grief, it occurred to him that his duty was to continue to spread good cheer in the world when the world war had made gloom almost impenetrable.

On Wednesday night a dapper little French lieutenant came down to the barracks. We had some music and readings and our jazz band played and then Lieutenant Crabb introduced him. He is only 27 years old, but is educated and matured by the tragic part he has played in the world war. He began very modestly and apologized for his poor English, which proved to be very good.

He told us how he was in the first battle of the Marne when the Germans were as close to Paris as Halsstead is to Newton, and some outposts even closer. He was lying behind a hedge firing his rifle, making a stand against the invaders, when a machine gun bullet went through his shoulder and lung, giving him a desperate wound. It occurred at 7 or so in the evening, and he lay wounded until 10, when the Germans were thrust back, and he was carried to a barn in a nearby village. Here he lay between a German officer, with a bad abdomen wound, and a Frenchman, with a bad arm wound. No doctor came to dress them, and the German officer, in his delirium, fell across our speaker, who was too weak to remove him, and there died. The Frenchman on the other side died because, as our lieutenant put it, "he die because he--what you say—he lose all his blood, you see."

At ten the next morning he was hastily bound and taken somewhere toward the rear. He lay in a railway station—why no one ever knew—24 hours, then rode and rode on a train lying in a — "what you say?—baggage car?" On Tuesday night he was wounded. On Sunday he finally reached the hospital. He was then, you see, only 23 years old. The first

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

763

fifteen minutes he said, "I hope I die soon, then later I found I still live, and then I think maybe it is better so."

He told us all this to show how little France was prepared when the savage foe leaped upon her. All this is changed, and when a man is wounded now, in 24 hours or less, he is far behind the lines in a good hospital. If he falls in an exposed place he may not be dressed till dark, but otherwise almost at once—now.

His recital was very graphic, and he had a pleasing modesty and a humorous way of saying things. He told us of the battle formations, ambulance work, stretcher-bearers, etc. He told us where and how we probably would work if we once get over there, and it made the fellows look at one another and grin a little at the grim prospect, but we were glad to talk to a man who had been there and actually knew. We asked him many questions.

This battle of the Marne, which was of course both bloody and decisive, he said was the battle when the alley rats, the night crooks, the denizens of the underworld, the bank clerks, the society leaders, the merchants, the preachers—in short, men of every class, poured out of Paris to defend her, and turn back the Germans, while women and children were fleeing in terror to Versailles. Three years, he said, had wrought many and great changes in methods of warfare, but in the sanitary department, which, of course, is ours, he said system has now replaced chaos, and its helping hand reaches from the edge of "no man's land" back through the first, second and third lines to the big inland hospitals where modern surgery and nursing snatches men back from the despair of hopeless wounds and shell shock, to health and usefulness.

Well, I must close. A half dozen of us are going over this p. m. to talk and sing to the colored troops at their Y. M. C. A., and to have them sing for us, which they can do wonderfully well, especially on some favorite song or hymn of the south.

As usual,

J. SYDNEY N.

Topeka Capital
Jan-27-1918

Soldiers in France are, as a rule, as happy and contented with their lot as persons engaged in such occupations can well be, and the experiences told of in the following letters are indications that the morale of the American army in the land across the sea is excellent.

An interesting experiment is told of in one of the letters—the actions of members of the Kansas ammunition train, practically all of them raised in a bone dry state, when they are turned loose in a country where wine is sold freely everywhere. Many of the boys swarmed the wine shops at first, but hard labor for a few days, together with solitary confinement in the company guard house soon convinced them that drinking wine was not profitable. The first few sentences acted as a "Keeley" cure for the entire camp, the correspondent writes, and now the men who drink do so moderately, while many never touch a drop.

TRIBUTE TO MOTHER.

A most beautiful tribute to his mother is paid by a Topeka boy, now in the marine corps and expecting to go to France soon, in a letter to an aunt. He says:

Allow me to insert an appreciation of my mother, at this time. I know she is dreading the consequences of this war great deal more than I do. She writes admirable letters, and when I left home she bade me "good-bye" in the same brave, tearless manner in which the French women have sent their men to the front. If I ever see active service, it will be her noble spirit, which guides my actions rather than any consuming fire of patriotism.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

764

Topeka Capital
June 16 - 1918

How Two Kansas Lads Started on Journey to Help Lick the Hun

The following story was written by a Kansas boy now in France with Uncle Sam's army. Except for the names it is a true story of the departure of two young men from the same family—one in the army, the other in the navy—and it presents a fair picture of a parting that has been multiplied many thousands of times in Kansas and other American homes.

Two taxicabs slowed up before the door. They stopped facing each other before the curbstone. The doors opened simultaneously and out stepped a man from each car, one wearing the uniform of an army officer, with the insignia of a captain in the aviation corps, the other dressed in navy blue, with the gold star and strip on collar and sleeve, indicating the naval rank of ensign. They stood facing each other for a moment, then the navy man raised his right hand in salute, which was promptly returned by the other; then with a laugh they heartily shook hands and went up the walk toward the house, arm in arm. As they reached the steps the door opened and the mother and sister appeared, each wreathed in smiles.

"Well, is this my little Jack? And look at that great, fine, big aviator; so glad to see you," said mother. Katherine, the sister, exclaimed: "How did you boys happen to get here together?" "I don't know," replied the boy in khaki. "I supposed the kid was here, until I saw his grinning at me as he got out of the taxi."

"Sister, we must hurry and get dinner for these two, dear, old boys."

"That's a good idea—how about some biscuit, marm?"

"Well, you can just have anything you want. Your sister and I have planned to feed you well the short time you are with us and have tried to lay in a supply of all the things we know you like." And mother looked most lovingly into both of the handsome faces before her as she finished speaking, then began rolling up her sleeves, ready for the biscuit making.

A Wonderful Meal.

The army man dropped his cap and gloves in a nearby chair and stamped out to the kitchen where mother had gone. The younger one laid his cap on the piano with an affectionate look at the gold strip and coat of arms on it, and went back into the little bedroom, where he brushed his hair. Then he came out into the dining room and grabbed Sis, whom he began to hug vigorously.

"Now, if you want anything to eat, don't use your strength on me. Go lick your big brother, if you can."

"Sure, that's easy."

"What's that, kid brother? Com'eere. I'll just take you a round or two and then we'll see whether the navy licks the army or not."

"Now, you boys go outside if you are going to scuffle, and don't be rough with your little brother, Robert."

"Bob and Jack," called Katherine a few minutes later, "come in; dinner's ready." "Comin,'" called the bird man. "Aye, aye, sir," said the sailor.

Then a wonderful meal was enjoyed by the reunited family. The laughter and jokes, so much missed during recent days by Mrs. Lansford and Katherine, made life seem real again. After the dinner the aviator leaned back in his chair and lit a cigar.

"Now, aren't you going to eat some of this pie?" wailed mother.

"Can't do it, marm."

"Gosh, he doesn't appreciate food any more. Wait till he has fared on beans and canned bill for a few months; then he'll be doggoned glad to eat a bone Pemmie has left."

"O, Jack, don't speak of such things. My boy hungry! I can't stand to think of such a thing." This from mother, as a look of anxiety came into her face.

"Come on now, mother, we are not dead yet and we've got five days at home, at least I have. How long have you, old boy?"

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

765

Confidential Information.

"I have to meet my corps in Kansas City a week from today, but I can go early, find Lieutenant _____ and give him the necessary instructions and then go on to New York with you. What ship will you be on, or do you know?"

"Yes, the U. S. S. _____, but that's not for general information."

"Well, the colonel let it out to two of us that we would sail on or about the _____th, but that, likewise, is not to get out at all."

"The deuce you say. I got a tip from Lieutenant Commander _____ that I would be on Rear Admiral _____'s flag ship, which I am pretty sure is commanding Squadron B, Atlantic fleet. Now that squadron has convoyed three contingents over already, and I reckon it will go again."

"Do you boys suppose you will be on the same ship going to France," asked Katherine.

"No, but it is very likely we will be within a mile of each other all the way over."

"O, I wish you could be together. It would be such a comfort to your mother to know that you were looking after each other even for that long."

The days passed very quickly and both boys were very busy seeing friends and visiting. There was much to talk about; how the training went on at the aviation school, and how the older brother was highly recommended by his instructors. He had gained the highest commission of any of the fellows who enlisted at the same time, and was therefore put in command of a flying corps, which was going overseas under sealed orders from the war department. The naval officer had gained his commission thru a series of fortunate events, which he could not explain himself, but was very modest about his rank at his tender age, until he viewed himself in a mirror. Then pride filled his chest and caused it to expand to great dimensions.

They Exchange Gifts.

Little was said about the future, except in very optimistic vein, and they both tried hard to keep their mother cheerful and succeeded very admirably, but now and then a sigh would escape her. They were happy days, tho, and the day for the final departure came altogether too soon. The day before they were to leave, two

packages came to the house of quite different dimensions. One proved to be a handsome naval sword, with the naval insignia in gold on the hilt and the following overlaid in gold on the blade: "Presented to Ensign Jack L. Lansford, U. S. Navy, by his brother, Capt. Robert W. Lansford, U. S. Reserve Aviation corps."

"There, you old sea-goin' salt, that ought to help you give the kaiser hell," said his brother as he handed it to him, with a very broad grin on his face.

"Nifty," said Sailor Jack, "very nifty. That is the one thing I needed to make me a full-fledged, salted-down, sea-goin' man-o'-warsman. You had the advantage of a suggestion, but I had not. I hope, however, that this will not displease you. That ring I designed myself, and even stayed right in the shop to see that these stones were set correctly around the aviation seal. May it witness the downfall of many of the kaiser's hell babies. It's got your identification engraved on the inside, but hope that no one will have

to look at it to tell where you belonged."

"My dear boys—" began mother, but sister cut her off and saved the day.

Sees Brother Safely Thru.

The next day came and with it the hour of leaving. Mother and sister both wanted to go to the train, but neither of the boys would hear to it. Both felt away down in their hearts that if the good-byes were prolonged any, the military and naval training they had received would be set back a ways, so with hasty embraces they caught up their grips and dashed out the door to the waiting taxi. Neither dared to look back and neither spoke as they were quickly carried to the station. On the station platform there were those who knew them and the cheerfulness and good humor had to be resumed. After stopping a few hours in Kansas City for the captain to arrange certain matters they journeyed on to New York. The naval officer reported to the commanding officer of his ship in Hoboken, and then together they started over to the New York side for a few hours of recreation before they embarked that night. As they stood on the forward end of the ferry which was taking them across, looking out over the crowded harbor, with its many tugs, merchant ships, etc., the sailor pointed out to the

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

766

Topeka Journal
June 22 - 1918

LIFE IN TRENCHES

Captain Tells of Fun Dodging Big Shells.

Mud and Slush and Cold Are Laughed At.

WOMAN PROVIDES COMFORTS

Men Sometimes Go for Days With Clothes Unchanged.

Always Plenty of Work in the Front Trenches.

mouth of the harbor, where one could see the hazy blue of the Atlantic, and said, "Out there the Huns are waiting for us. I'm goin' to see you safely thru' them and land you in France; then it's up to you to drive the hell hounds to the earth."

"Believe me, boy, we're goin' to do it, too. I didn't work for this uniform just so I could strut around American hotels lookin' like a million dollars. I believe I've got as good a chance as anyone, and if you get within close range of the devils, just tell 'em for me how it happened."

"I'll tell 'em all right. And when you hear that Sailor Jack has gone down, you can just figure that he had him a Hun on the end of his sword."

"I don't know yet just how many of the barbarian aircraft I can handle at once, but if I ever do start west, you can be damned sure that Fritz has gone first."

Yes Boys—Do Your Best.

They found out that Squadron B was to convoy a few thousand troops over and the aviation corps was among them. They were to sail at 10 a. m., and as the navy man had to be on deck four hours before sailing, they were on the deck a little before 6. They were silent now and a look of grim determination was on both their faces. The aviator stood with his arms folded, tapping the deck with the toe of his boot. His eyes were very wide and he looked very solemn. The sailor stood with his hands behind his back looking out over the bay at the first rays of the sun...

Suddenly the ship's bell sounded, reminding them that it was near time for parting. The sailor turned around abruptly and said, "Robert, there isn't much that we can say now. We both know just how the other feels."

"Yes, Jack, this may be the last—do your best."

They clasped hands for a brief moment and stood silent. Then backing off a few paces they both raised their right hands in salute. A faint smile played over their faces as they dropped their hands smartly. The aviator turned on his heel and walked briskly up the deck, while the sailor slipped down the gangway on the deck of the ship just as the boatswain piped, "All hands, stand by."

An interesting letter has been received in Topeka from France written by a young captain, but 24 years old, extracts from which are given below. The letter, which is addressed to his Dad, was written in a dugout on the firing line. "Here I am in smoke, dirt, mud, slime, rats, fleas and lice—cold as a gravestone and happy too, happy to think that I have led into the first line trenches, the first organized group of combatant troops under our dear old flag. I am doubly pleased for I have done my ten day tour without a casualty, either thru shell fire (and we caught a gob) illness brought about by trench life, exposure or ordinary sickness. But am now chirp as a squirrel, for tomorrow night we will be relieved.

"We have slept in all our clothes, including shoes and mud in a dark, damp dugout, forty feet below the ground, slimy and wet, on old well used straw bunks, double decked and with chicken wire for springs, full of all species of 'crawlers.' Cannot build fires in daytime for fear of inviting the ever-ready and willing shells. When we do build one at night the miserable little tin stove smokes you out. Oh, this is the life. Until the relief comes nothing to do but watch, that eternal 'stand to' watching, ever watching.

Can't Work All Time.

"When the boche moves we know it. When he sleeps we 'comprende.' When

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

707

he works we know what he does, a shell may pop the top off of your little shelter or a bullet knock your glasses from your hand, but just keep right on watching, it's your job and thousands of lives are depending on just this watching. But we do work too, mostly at night. The boche won't let you work all the time, nice fellow he is, so the trenches must be drained and the caved in earth replaced and made secure with revetments. Food and material and munitions must be brought up by hand. Nights here, even tho' arduous, are strange, the rockets, millions of them, sizzling up in the sky and bursting into beautiful white stars floating peacefully thru the darkness and lighting up a bit of shell-torn bloody land.

"Down on the ground strange things happen. An ordinary every-day post; just look at it! It's pretty dark, everything is quiet; soon the post gets larger; you strain your eyes trying to pierce the blackness of night; now shoulders appear, later a helmet. Yes, the helmet has a spear on it; surely this time it is a boche trying our wire. When this apparition moves, the sentinel fires. The N. C. O. comes, walks out and finds a little round bullet hole thru the post. Sometimes the machine gunners cut posts down when they start to walking away.

When Shells Come.

"Today as I was showing the sector to the captain who will relieve me, I heard the familiar whistle of Fritzie's prize 77. It kept coming right at us. Down we went—the mud wasn't too deep—down in the bottom of that trench. Surely this fellow would never hit! We crouched lower, in a knot, trying to make the helmet as big as possible. Still coming! God! I thought this one would do its trick, but here I am. Then—bang! just over. When I opened my eyes, the mud and wire were still going up. It had burst about ten feet away. More work for Sammy tonight fixing that wire and clearing the dirt out of the trench.

"Am now back 75 miles from the front. When we arrived, the surgeon greeted us with an order that all must be inspected for lice and bathed (we now have hot showers.) The cots are in the store room and all the blankets and packs have gone some three miles away to be disinfected, no cover, so down we flop right in the gutter on the side of the road. The big trucks rattle by dangerously close but no one knows, all of them have gone off dead asleep. All but the cooks and officers, for chow must be ready in the morning. I have sent the other officers off to bed and go hunt up a cup of coffee.

Old Lady Thoughtful.

The old lady in the place where I am to sleep has been fine enough to voluntarily fix me up some rations. Into bed I flop, no sleep for three days and feet as cold as icicles. My feet hit something hot under the cover. Down I went to see what (maybe one of those big trench rats we just left); it was a hot water bottle. This dear old lady has slipped in and put it in my bed and gone out—not a word said, isn't it fine? I dozed off to sleep thinking of how mummy would love to thank this thoughtful dear old lady. Now today, I have put in for a pass to Paris. It's granted, so I am off tomorrow from darkness, gloom and death, to brightness, false pleasure and false living."

Oipe Optimist
July 3-1918

A Limited Service Man's Letters.

Larned, Kansas.

June 21, 1918.

Dear Folks:

Well, I arrived O. K. in Larned at 5:57 o'clock. Frank was at the depot to meet me. We ate supper and went out. When we got home, there was quite a surprise on me. About 100 of my friends were there and we surely had a fine time. They gave me a nice Bible for a present with all their names written in it. Then tonight the whole county gave us a picnic at the state farm and there was sure a big crowd. They sure honored the boys that are to leave here. We start in the morning at 5:49 o'clock, June 22, and will get to Vancouver the 25th. We have our transportation and our meal tickets to eat at the Harvey House. Well, with best wishes to all, I will close for now.

As ever,

Oren.

Will write another card to-morrow somewhere in the U. S. A.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

768

Olpe Optimist Topeka Journal
July 3 - 1918 July 6 - 1918

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Mays and folks:

Well, we are still on the road. We are about 60 miles from Salt Lake City and are 2 days behind time. There was a big mud slide and we have been laid up most of the night. It sure has been some trip. It is worth a thousand dollars to make this trip,— the most sights anyone ever saw. We have been in the mountains ever since we left Pueblo,— about 400 miles. We are sitting right beside a big mountain that is a mile high. We are going up to the top. We shall not get out of here until noon any how. There are 29 of us now and a nice bunch. Well, I will sed you a book of our trip from Denver to Salt Lake. I have marked some of the places we went through. Show it to all of the folks and then send it out to Frank. Well, will write more next time.

Oren.
The Red Cross sure have treated us fine all along the way.

TOPEKAN WAS WISE

Soldier in France Put One Over on Censor Over There.

A Topeka officer, who is censor for his company in France, sends back the story of a Topekan in his ranks who originally hailed from a "green isle in the sea."

This Topeka Irishman wrote home to his family, telling them where he was stationed, where he had been and where he was to go. He used names and dates so freely that the censor had been obliged to delete the greater part of his letter, and the pages were shot thru with numerous holes where names had been cut out. The soldier was then advised to write personal news to his family that did not concern movements of the army. In an effort to comply with the censor regulations, he wrote rods of information as to the state of his health, the beauty of French scenery, the skill of the French cooks, etc. At the end of the letter he placed a postscript which said, "Look under the stamp."

The officer censor scented a plot. He rushed to heat up the teakettle, and, all impatience, he steamed off the stamp.

There he read: "Go to h—; I'll tell them myself when I get home."

Topeka Capital
Aug 11 - 1918

MARCH FOX TROT TO TUNE OF "THE OLD GRAY MARE"

Masonic Letters Tell of Exciting Times in France.

Messages to Topeka Masons Come to J. B. Doncyson and Are Posted Where All May Read.

Every mother and father who has a son in France, or in an army training camp, can well envy J. B. Doncyson, secretary of the Scottish Rite bodies of Topeka, in his soldier correspondence. Each week he receives an average of from 35 to 40 letters from boys.

Kansas Memory



Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

769

"over there," who write to him for the whole consistory, as the letters are posted or left where each member may read what the boys have to say concerning army life, the prospects of licking the Huns quickly, or gossip pertaining to life in the French villages where they are billeted. "Jim" answers these letters the same day they are received, and persuade many of the Scottish Rite Masons to do likewise, thus keeping the members "over there" happy by giving them plenty of letters.

Morrison's Band Leads.

One of the most recent letters received was from Dr. T. S. Morrison, bandmaster in the 130th field artillery band, in which he gives an inkling of the strenuous life the boys are leading preparatory to getting into the fight. He mentions an eighteen-mile march, on which he had the honor of leading the regiment, and of the boys coming back just about all fagged out. He says that on the last lap he turned the band loose on "The Old Gray Mare," the tune made famous by the 130th field artillery band, and the march ended in a riot of "pep" and enthusiasm. Instead of dragging their feet, as they had been doing for some time, the soldiers began marching in fox trots, two-steps and showing other evidences of liveliness. Dr. Morrison, who was one of the most widely known Masons in Topeka, speaks very kindly of the French people, but asserts that the inevitable profiteer preys upon the boys in the vicinity of the American camps. He also stated that his band had lost all their instruments and music, but did not give any details.

Another interesting letter received was from Capt. C. C. LuH, also in the 130th field artillery, in which he sends his greetings to all Scottish Rite members, and gives a vivid account of his work in the medical department.

French Worship Americans.

Sergt. Howard S. Scarle, Royal M. Remley and many others who are widely known for their work in the consistory, have written cheerful messages recently.

The fact that the French people fairly worship American soldiers is one of the outstanding features of practically all letters received from "over there." Not one word of complaint is ever noticed in any of the hundreds of letters received by Mr. Doncycson. The

Topeka boys are contented and declare they will stay on the job until the war is ended, doing their share in putting Kaizer Bill Hohenzollern out of business for once and for all.

Topeka Journal
Aug. 22-1918

A letter from one of the Topeka boys over France contains the following quotation which may interest the public:

"Of course I know how curious you are to learn the identity of the Topeka man mentioned along matrimonial lines, but I promised him that I wouldn't tell a soul back home until he was ready. But it was true, nevertheless, and the only information I can give you is that he was a member of the Tivoli club and played golf regularly at—well, either the Shawnee golf or the Country club. The young French lady's grandfather was a marquis and the happy bridegroom of two or three months ago says he'll let the secret out in Topeka by Christmas.

"But these rumors that are floating around the land of the free and the home of the brave that the French mademoiselles are marrying the American soldiers by the thousands are all pure rot. There are isolated exceptions like our mutual friend of whom I was just speaking. But take it from me, the Yankee girls seems to glow in comparison to all the rest. The French girls are very attractive, but there are enough American young women over here in the various services such as Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., etc., to make the soldiers from the states appreciate the lassies who do not say 'Oui, oui.'

"From all reports Kansas is enjoying a mighty hot summer. And here it is nearly August, and I am wearing woolen clothes, and piling three or four blankets over me at night. As one of the men on the Kansas City Journal would say, 'Blind, bleeding, itching and protruding Kansas.' And we used to ha, ha when he said it, but I notice that no one in our regiment kids Kansas over here. I think they'll be good citizens when we return. Bob Beine will probably be elected to the state legislature and I know that Phil Sproat will head a civic improvement association. Frank Fable will grow a long beard and be a church pillar and Willis Garvey will go to congress."

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

770

Topeka Capital Topeka Journal
Sept. 8 - 1918 Nov. 30 - 1918

TOPEKAN WAS BURIED AND GASSED; SAID HE "WAS BRUISED UP SOME"

In a letter to his mother, which she received two weeks ago, a young Topeka officer serving with the American forces in France, wrote that he was in a base hospital after "getting mixed up with a German six-inch shell," as he expressed it. He stated that he was not much disfigured, but had been "bruised up some," and expected to be able to return to duty in a few days. His family in Topeka knew that he was with the forces which were engaged in the French and American offensive which wiped out the Germans' salient on the Marne, but he gave no further details of the nature of his injuries or how they were received. Naturally, his mother was somewhat worried because of the lack of details.

Yesterday another Topeka family received a letter from a son who had been wounded in the same fighting, and who met the young Topeka officer in the base hospital in which both were patients. The two had known each other, in their boyhood days in Topeka. The second Topekan wrote his family that the other, the one who only wrote his mother that he had "got mixed up with a German six-inch shell," had been buried under a stone wall which the six-inch shell blew in on him, had been unconscious for eight hours, and had also been gassed while unconscious. And the young officer wrote his mother that he had been "bruised up some!"

FUN THRU IT ALL

Kansas Boys in Thirty-Fifth Never Quit Smiling.

Topeka Boy Writes of Way They Took Hardships.

ALWAYS WERE ON THE MOVE

Ate Whatever They Were Given and Enjoyed It.

Popecorn Not One of Things Wanted Christmas.

War with the Thirty-fifth division seems to have been a mixture of fun and frolic liberally sprinkled with a full share of hardships laughingly endured, according to a letter from one Topeka boy in France to his mother. The writer of the letter is a member of the 139th infantry, which is the regiment formed by the consolidation of the old Third Kansas and Fourth Missouri. The regiment is an integral part of the Thirty-fifth division, the unit nearest to the heart of Kansas and Missouri.

Troops from Topeka in the Thirty-fifth are the signal corps, the engineers, the battery of field artillery, the headquarters and supply companies of both the old Third Kansas Infantry and the First Kansas field artillery, and the bands of both the artillery and the infantry organizations. All of these troops are the old National Guard regiments called to the colors August 5, 1917, trained at Doniphan and sent to France last spring.

Covered With Glory.

The division participated in the hard fighting along the Meuse and covered itself with glory and blood when it forcibly took the Argonne wood from the Prussians.

The letter from the front which gives a splendid review of the work of the Thirty-fifth and of the morale of the troops, follows:

"Don't have any idea what I'm going

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

771

to fill these pages with, but anyway you'll know I'm well. Six months ago we left the home soil and ventured forth upon the fierce Atlantic in gay search for more adventure. Our wish has been fulfilled. Adventure we have found, six full months of it; it seems like ages, and more promised ahead. We have battled in the north, marched and fought in the south, have held the lines in enemy country. Have driven him back from our own invaded land, defeated his best—the Prussian guard—and are only too ready to drive him further. Well, all summed up, we're having our share of the fun, getting our share of the hardships and as a whole enjoying it all.

"The sun seldom shines or sets two days and finds us in the same spot; each night we fall asleep on new-made beds, sometimes dry, sometimes wet, generally wet; sometimes sheltered, generally not. Morning finds us in all manner of positions, places, conditions and humors. Night the same. Our food comes hot and cold, good and bad, all mixed, all eaten and all enjoyed; one day steak, the next day canned horse; bread, then hardtack. So it goes. One day we growl at and cuss our commanders, the next cheer and honor them—of course, obey them always.

"But this is life, with all that's in it, and so it's interesting. Now, how is that for ravings? Well, anyway, I'm feeling fine and in pretty good humor, and feel no effects from the battle except I'm full of war stories, to sit around and yarn when Johnny comes marching home soon. You know we hear that peace talk too, but it don't worry us much; lots of it goes over us. When he, the kaiser, has had enough, all he has to do is to hoist a white flag and back on out of France and Belgium, then we can talk peace. It's kind of fun to fight when we're whipping and it is a poor time to have any armistice.

Don't Want Popcorn.

"Now I wrote you the other day enclosing the package label. Christmas package. Well, do as you think best. Anything from home will seem nice, altho now, please don't send popcorn as one boy's mother did. Just make a nice package, that's all. Send a discharge and ticket home, of course, if you can, or a peace treaty maybe.

"Now, mother, I really didn't mean it when I said you write fairly often, cause you write pretty good; but our mail comes so much in bunches, it don't seem so often. Maybe it is a long ways over here but it's a damn sight farther from here over home and I get awful lonesome for mail sometimes. You know just any old thing is news to us, just so it's from home. Edna Corbet wrote me from Paris upon her arrival there and if

ever the opportunity even approaches, I'll sure go to the trouble of A. W. O. L. (military term) to see her.

"Now for the home news. How's old yellow Tom. Speaking of cats, an old black mamma cat with a family of four help me occupy this small cubby hole. Nice kitty, too. More cats, nor noiser cats, I never saw before.

"Now, women. Haven't seen a real honest-to-God girl, well since years ago. Please may the good Lord save a few real females for us poor war-worn mortals. There ain't a woman within forty miles of here. France must have moved away just before we entered, at least the women have departed. My for a look at some sweet American girl. Send over one in that Christmas box."

Topeka Capital
Feb 27-1919

NO RULES DISOBEYED, BUT YANK IS IN GUARD HOUSE

"Dear Mother:—

"I have disobeyed no officer, violated no rule of war, have kept myself clean, my shoes polished, and my coat properly buttoned. Yet I am in the guard house for 90 days and must give up 25 per cent of my princely salary for the next four months, all because I saw fit in a letter which I wrote you, but which you did not receive, to mildly criticise the way things were being run over here. The censor has your letter and the guard house has me."

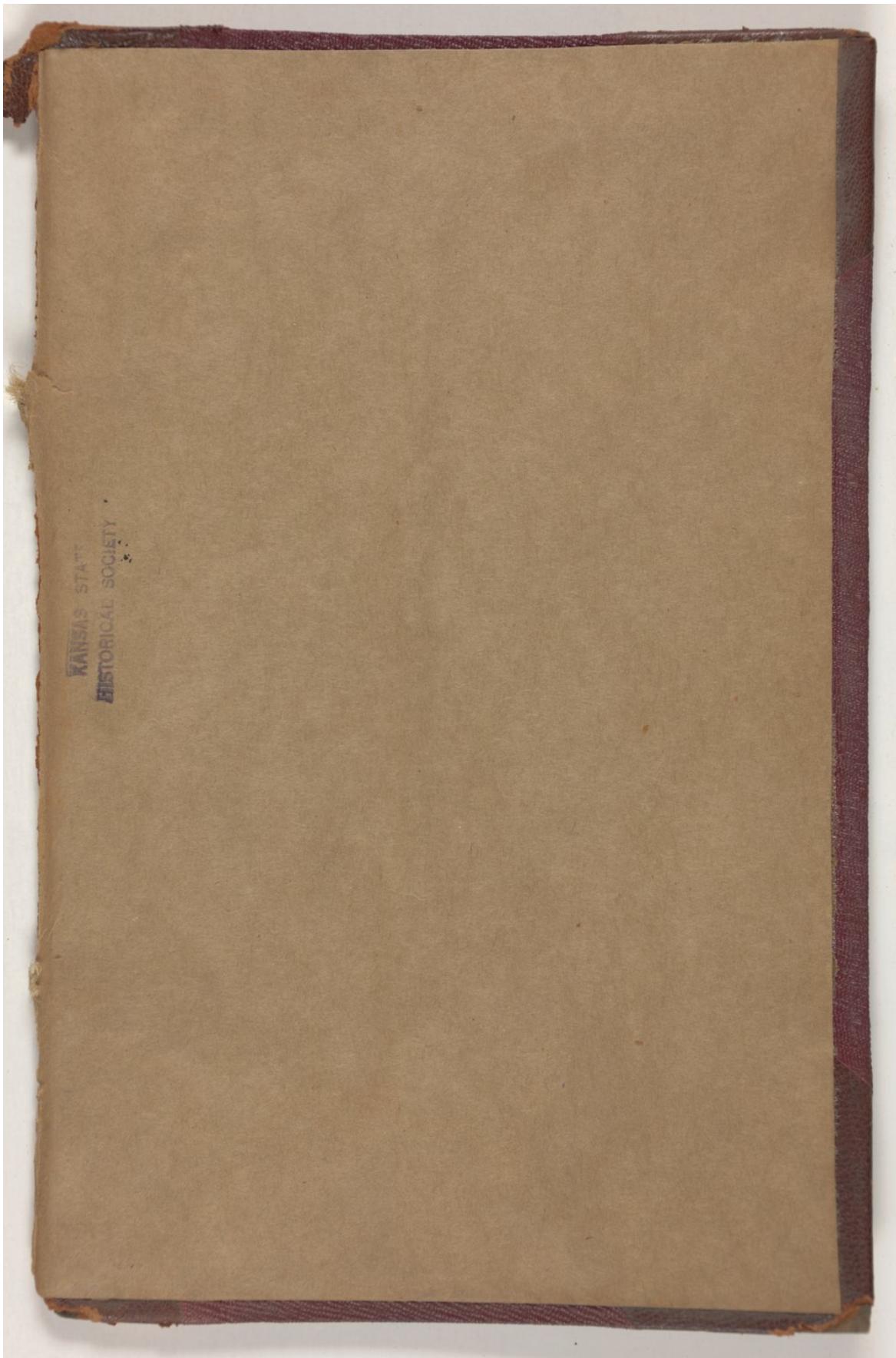
This is the text of a letter a Kansas soldier in France sent his dependent mother. Governor Allen has the letter and will endeavor to find out when the war department Germanized our soldiers.

Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers



Kansas Memory



KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Letters from Kansas Boys, World War I Soldiers

