

WORLD WAR I

“Letters Home”

Written by the Boys from Kinmundy, IL

Copied from Kinmundy’s newspapers:
“The Kinmundy Express” and the
“Marion County Express”

Compiled by Dolores Ford Mobley
Oct. 2012

“The Kinmundy Express” – July 26, 1917

“Caught in the Draft Net”

“Large Number of Kinmundy Boys Called for Army Service. Some Will be Exempt.”

The terrible suspense of awaiting the verdict of the great human inttery, conducted at Washington last Friday has finally come to an end, and now for many there is still the hope that their claim for exemption will dismiss them or possibly some physical defect will keep them out the trenches “over there.” These wishes are probably finding a larger place in the minds and hearts of the mothers of the country than the victims of the drafts themselves.

The great drag net that holds in its meshes young men of all nationalities, classes and positions in life carried with it a very considerable number of boys in Kinmundy and also many who reside in other townships but who receive their mail through the Kinmundy Post office. Following is a list of which, without doubt some will fall under one or the other of the various rules for exemption and others of course will be privileged to serve in the history making events of next few months. Although many of those who escaped this first call are no doubt counting themselves lucky, yet there are probably many others who secretly envy those who have thus been called.

John BARBEE, Monty BRAY, Lonnie DUDMAN, Alfred LEMAY, Lincoln SPENCER, Fred HANKINS, H. Morris DAVIS, Murry B. JONES, Warren H. SMITH, Earnest HARRIS, Geo. A. BAYLIS, Jonathan Forrest GREEN, Samuel Eli ROBB, J. Oscar COX, Rudolph W. SOLDNER, Raymond SOLDNER, Ray Forrest HARGRAVE, Walter BAYLIS, Sam H. REESE, W. Lloyd NEIL, Loren KLINE, Guy BARBEE, Clayton CORNELL, Orion BUTTS, Orville GARRETT, Glenn THREEWIT, Ener Otis ZIMMER, Frank E. CONANT, Samuel E. LOWE, Clarence ALDERSON, Thos. OUTHOUSE, Alfred MULVANEY, Roy MILLICAN, Fred HANKS, Russell SWIFT, John NEAVILL, Chas. Fred SUCCO, Henry STOCK, F. Clark COCKRELL, Benj. E. BUTTS, Grover Cleveland COURSON, Wesley S. ROBB, A.B. WOORLEY, John T. PEARLER, Chester KLINE, Jesse I. WEEMS, Walter MILLER, Joe METZGER, Grover JOHNSON, J.T. WELLS, Clyde PERRY, Lucius HULTS.

“The Kinmundy Express” – Aug. 30, 1917

“Men Drafted by Exemption Board”

“Twenty Kinmundy Men Included in the First Call. County Quota Nearly Complete.”

When the government issues its call for the first quota of the new Liberty Army to assemble at cantonments, 20 Kinmundy men will depart for the camp at Louisville, Ky. The county exemption board has passed upon the following men and has accepted them for service. This number may be increased out of the new call which the board has made to secure the 69 men yet needed to fill the number required of the county. O.E. GARRETT and C.R. ALDERSON will present exemption claims to the district board at East St. Louis.

The men to be called are: John BARBEE, L.H. SPENCER, F.E. HANKINS, Sam ROBB, R.W. SOLDNER, Loren E. KLINE, O.E. GARRETT, E.O. ZIMMER, Geo. HALEY, Sam LOWE, Chas. SUKOW, Ben BUTTS, Murray JONES, J.O. COX, Ray SOLDNER, Walter BAYLIS, W.L. NEIL, C.B. ALDERSON.

“The Kinmundy Express” – Sept. 6, 1917

“Off for Their Training Camp”

“Seven Kinmundy Men in First Five Per cent departed for Training Camp Wednesday.”

“More to Follow Later.”

At last after what seemed interminable waiting, marching orders have come for five percent of Marion County's first quota to the new Liberty Army. Notices were received late Tuesday evening to report at Salem early Wednesday morning prepared to proceed at once to the training camp at Louisville, Ky. The instructions to these men are to bring with them, in addition to the clothes they wear, one suit of underwear and a toilet and shaving outfit. They will provide their own transportations to Salem from which point their transportation and meals will be furnished by the government. Upon arriving at Louisville, they will be put through another examination and if turned down, return fare will also be provided.

This first summons includes only five percent of the first call in the county and numbers fifteen, out of which seven are called from Kinmundy.

Following is a list of Kinmundy's honor roll: John BARBEE, S.E. LOWE, Fred E. HANKINS, S.E. ROBB, R.W. SOLDNER, L.E. KLINE, and E.O. ZIMMER.

“The Kinmundy Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Dec. 6, 1917

Eugene PRUETT came home Thursday evening from Ft. Sheridan and is visiting his mother, Mrs. Anna PRUETT, and other relatives and friends until December 15 when he will sail for France. Eugene enlisted for service for Uncle Sam August 27. He is a graduate of the Illinois University. A number of young graduates enlisted with him but he is one of the few who received a promotion. Just before returning home he was made a 2nd lieutenant. The folks at home are glad to learn of his advancement. We are sure other promotions will follow, because Eugene is of the right caliber.

“The Kinmundy Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Dec. 26, 1917

Bensonhurst, NY

Mrs. Clarence GRAY

Dear Aunt and Uncle,

Just received your letter and was very glad to hear from you. It found me feeling fine. I sure answered the call and am not one bit sorry for it and will try to make good, even if it costs me my life. We turned our ship over to the French Government in Brooklyn, N.Y., and we are awaiting orders to sail. We are sure getting all the drilling we want but do not know just how long we will be here. Is Ben Craig still at home? If you see him tell him the battleship he was on is in harbor at Brooklyn, N.Y. It is the U.S.S. Tennessee, others are there also, U.S.S. New York, Arizona, Indiana, Wyoming. They are also building one fine ship, the New Mexico. It is not yet complete, they just have the guns mounted; it is going to be better than the Arizona. I know you will be glad to learn about the large ships. Say aunt, a box of eats will sure be good for Christmas and uncle, I smoke Bull Durham.

It is lovely weather here for the 6th of December. I think the next move we make will be to Delaware and get another sub-chaser and perhaps take it across. This U.S. Navy is some life. Every way one looks here, he sees a war ship, and when I come back and see you, I can tell you lots of things, for one sure learns a lot here.

Milton L. HALL,
Sec. Base; No. 6; Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, N.Y.

“The Kinmundy Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Jan. 9, 1918

Camp Grant; Dec. 15, 1917

Mr. Edwin HARRELL, Kinmundy, Ill.

Dear Uncle,

I have been located here since Oct. 3. Today is Sunday and a rather dull day in spite of the fact that there are several thousand visitors here. The week is pretty well occupied with exercising, drilling and lectures. The Lieutenant explained the mechanism of the Craig rifle to us one day last week. We have been using wooden guns lately owing to the fact that there are not enough rifles to go around. They are training us in the different bayonet exercise position and aiming drills mostly.

The Camp is an immense affair being built on about 15,000 acres five miles from Rockford. The Rock river borders the camp on the west.

There are several dozen Army Y.M.C.A. scattered about over the camp. They furnish us all of the stationery we use and one has a library in one end of the building. The auditorium is fitted up with a moving picture machine and a rostrum. We have some good pianists. Every “Y” has a good piano which make the evenings pass pleasantly.

They are going to be a large number leave for France about the 15th. I don’t know whether I will be one of that number or not. We never know when or who it will be until about 12 hours before hand.

So many of the boys are always have a clash with the new commanders. I can be here until the war closes, and not have any words with them. The day after I arrived I saw two marched off to the guard house.

_____ refused to sign up, Religious _____, I understand was the cause. We have some fine Lieutenants for instructors. Some of the non-commissioned officers are Lieutenants in feelings.

We have been without heat, but they have the boilers going now _____ had small colds. Our eatables are good. I understand Co I _____ in having such a good cook.

We will be under quarantine Monday. One of the boys in our barracks broke out with the measles or will in a few hours anyway. Of course that will stop outgoing mail. We were under quarantine about three weeks ago for spinal meningitis.

Fifteen more of our men are going south; two to Alabama, and thirteen to Waco, Texas to Camp McArthur. One is from our squad.

Last night we assembled in the mess hall to see Lieut. Andrews demonstrate Lewis Automatic Rifles. It is a 30 caliber same as our Enfield rifle and shoots about 4000 shots per minute. It weighs 28 pounds and can be fired with the butt at the hip and moving at a walk. It is gas operated and air cooled. The barrel is inside of the radiator which is 26 inches in length and 4 inches in diameter. The radiator is made of aluminum which is much lighter than the machine gun. The Lewis gun is a new invention, being made in 1917. It costs \$480. The French auto gun costs \$20. The operator must be able to take it apart and assemble it in the dark, we must all know how to fire it however. We are having a good deal of bayonet work. On January 15th, 10% of our Co. will be chosen as first class bayonet fighters. Next week we have fencing lessons. We will pair off and go at it as our instructor says. He said he will have the ambulance with us and if we get hurt after being instructed, it will be his own fault.

This morning was inspected, we passed O.K., but they are drawing the line straighter. We had a written examination in the semaphore code. I got along alright except for writing down “pints” of horseshoes instead of “prints of horseshoes”.

We go on guard in less than an hour. It is now after 3:00 p.m.. My Corporal last week froze one ear__ some but that was one of the coldest nights we had, it won’t be so bad tonight though. We will come off at 4:00 p.m. tomorrow.

At my elbow, a Victoria is playing "Uncle Josh Keeps House". We do not lack for entertainment you see. I have only done fair in my target work. The best I have is at 300 yards. I made 61 points out of 75. The Captain is second best in the regiment, he made 64 points.

Must close or be late for formal Guard Mount.

As ever, Hobart SEE

“The Kinmundy Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Jan. 9, 1918

Somewhere in France, Dec. 14, 1917

Dear Father, Brother, and sister,

Our voyage across the Atlantic took about 15 days and it grew quite monotonous after a few days out. It is much different from an overland trip since there wasn't a change of scenery every minute. Ordinary I suppose our trip would have been less than 10 days but a direct course was not taken. I was only sea sick for a little while, a part of one day, but didn't miss eating any meals, but some of the men were sick all the way across and I realize it is far from a pleasant feeling. We landed somewhere in France about 2:30 p.m., but stayed on the boat all night; early the next morning, we marched to a rest camp, where we are now located.

The camp is located two or three miles from the town at which we landed. I have been in the city several times. It surely was strange to be among people to whom you could not talk, but I managed to get my meals even though I did not always know what I was ordering. Have been about other towns and have seen quite a bit of this part of France. The trains do not travel very fast and are not very large box cars not much larger than some wagons at home.

The French make a big thing out of meals and do not believe in the American style of eating everything at one time. One thing at a time is brought to the table and you do not get the next course until that is finished. Even radishes comprise one course and potatoes are never served with your meat. Occasionally one can find a place where he can get meat and potatoes served together. In a way it is a good way to eat as you can't eat so fast, but for a working man most too much time would be spent in eating.

We are billeted in barracks at the present time and mess with the men; mess is really good. Men have very comfortable quarters and are very well pleased with our present occupation. The climate is pleasant considering the season, have had considerable rain and the ground is damp.

The towns that I have seen are quite old and are queerly arranged. I don't believe they were ever laid out. The main street generally circles the town and the others extend from it in every direction and the streets are very narrow. Very little entertainment, in fact, nothing doing along the social line. Of course I am not permitted to tell you what we are doing in a military way except that at the present time, I am doing work similar to what I was doing when I enlisted. We expect to move from here before many weeks.

Woolen uniforms and service hats must be worn by officers and men at all time. Officers must wear the Sam Brown belt, the same as the one worn by the British and French officers. Have not seen anything of Paris, as yet, and no doubt will be some time before we ever get headed in that direction. Personally I am feeling fine, hope all are well at home, and hope to hear from home some time in the future. Write often, for letters sure will be welcome here.

With love,

Orie

My address: Lieut. Orie H. WAINSCOTT
501st Engineers; A.E.F. France via New York

“The Kinmundy Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Jan. 9, 1918

To the Womans Club ,

We received the Christmas box and was sure glad to get it. We are all well except Alva. He is in the hospital with the measles. Tell all the friends to write.

From a friend,

Corporal Abe BAYLISS, 130 U.S. Infantry, Camp Logan, Houston, Tex.

To the Womans Club,

Your Christmas parcel gladly received and I thank you very much for your kind remembrance. With best wishes, I am, Leon M. HANNA; Houston, Texas.

To the Woman's Club,

All of us thank you very much and appreciate your remembering us Christmas. We wish to thank all the others who helped at making it up and we enjoyed every bit of it. We are all of us getting along fine and wish for all of you the very best the New Year affords. Thank you again, we remain,
The boys from Kinmundy in Co. G, 130th Inf., Camp Logan, by Geo. H. ANNA

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Jan. 17, 1918

Somewhere in England; December 3, 1917

Mrs. E. HAMMERS, Kinmundy, Ill.

Dear Aunt – Well, I suppose you are wondering what has become of me. I am in England and feeling fine. We have not been here long, we spent Thanksgiving on the ocean and it was quite different from any ever spent; we sure didn't have turkey. We had a much better ship than the one we started over in before; was more room and better bunks; the eats were not quite as good, but then we can't expect all things to be as they were at home.

Everything seems so strange to us here, they are about fifty years behind the times. The trains look like stage coaches, they are built with compartments, with doors on the side, and one of our coal cars would make at least ten of them. We also have a time trying to count the money; we have a pocket full of money and don't know how much we have either. I will close now and write more later.

Your loving nephew,

Private Chas. HAMMERS

H.D. of Co. 168 U.S. Inf. A.E.F. via New York

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Jan. 17, 1918

Brooklyn, N.Y.; December 27, 1917

Mr. and Mrs. C. GRAY,
Dear Uncle and Aunt,

Just a few lines to let you know that I have left Bensonhurst and am in Brooklyn, N.Y. on the U.S.S.C. It is a fine ship and will be complete in a few days when we go to New London, Conn. for a week or two for gun practice and then across. That is the latest dope we got.

I am taking up wireless during my spare time for I want to learn all I can while I have the chance. They told me if I wanted to study it, all it took was brains and I think I have a few left. It is so cold up here and as far as the eye can see is war ships, battleships, torpedo ships and in fact, every kind that is known. We have two big cannons on our ship besides machine guns. It is 110 feet long and will make four miles per hour. It is a submarine chaser. The only thing I don't like is that it rocks so much, but I have only been sea sick once and that was going through the Wellen Canal at Fort Dalhause, Canada. We would get into the locks and drop from the surface all the way from 10 to 65 feet, but when we hit the Hudson River we had fine sailing. The Red Cross gave us some heavy clothes which we sure appreciate, sweaters, underwear, socks which are all hand knit. I also have four pairs of blankets and a hammock so I can rock myself to sleep now.

Was Charley WOODS and Ray WHITE drafted?

Our Captain is fine; he bought the crew one thousand cigarettes, so guess we will smoke for awhile.

I go to school three hours a day learning wireless and it is just like school in the city or town; we can not whisper or raise a fuss; if we do they restrict our liberty.

It is getting time for mess and I hear, “Hit the decks for chow,” I will close. Answer real soon and tell me all the news from home.

Your loving nephew,

Milton HALL
U.S.S. Co. 80; Brooklyn, N.Y., Navy Yards

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Jan. 17, 1918

Camp Taylor, Ky; January 11, 1918

The Womans' Club,
Dear Friends,

I will now write you a few lines to let you know that I received the cake and candy all O.K., and was sure glad to get it. I am glad some one besides my family is thinking of me back in Illinois. Well, Mrs. BROWN, I see you have heard of me being in the hospital. I have been in the hospital now 45 days and have been in bed all of the time and the doctor will not let me get up. I set up in bed now, but I am not allowed to get up yet.

I remain as ever your friend,

Roy W. ABBOTT
Base Hospital, Ward 5c; Camp Taylor, Ky.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Feb. 20, 1918;

January 1, 1918; Somewhere in France

Dear Folks,

I received your glad letter yesterday. I write often; have you received them lately? I am well and hope everybody is well at home. How is Mable getting along at school? What she wants get it there for I can't get anything over here that is worth anything.

I received Mrs. BROWN's package (from the Red Cross and Woman's Club). I also received a package from my girl friend, some candy, chewing gum and other things. She is sending me a helmet to wear under my steel helmet.

Have you started any magazines to me yet? Grandpa go to the store and buy for me a good pair of yarn gloves, a pair of leather gloves; get me a good heavy woolen sweater, two woolen Jersey sweaters and one of those toboggans. Now be sure to get these, it may cost something but I have to keep warm and they are just what I need.

From your loving grandson,

Zon SIMER

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Feb. 27, 1918;

Feb. 20, 1918

Mrs. Jas. T. BROWN and all;

Received your letter and was sure glad to hear from you and glad to know that some one thinks of the soldiers, for this is an unhappy life for a married man. I got the card and the box Monday and I thank you all very much for the presents. Tell Jim we are on the rifle range now, guess we will finish this week, as we have had 12 days of it. It has been summer here for about two weeks. You asked me if I got the paper from up there. I don't get any appears at all. I saw Sammy LOWE the other night. He is in another company but I see him every once in a while. How is everybody back in Kinmundy? I sure would like to get back with my family, but perhaps it won't be long. I will close now again thanking you all for the box and hoping the war will soon be over and we can all come home.

Respectfully yours,

Murray JONES

Supply Co. 346 Inf., Camp Pike, Ark.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Feb. 27, 1918;

Somewhere in France, Jan. 13, 1918

Mr. Lloyd HAMMERS,
Dear Cousin,

I guess you think I am never going to answer your letter of Nov. 20; I only received it last week. I wish I could have been with you on the hunting trips, but about this time I was thinking how big the ocean was and I sure did think it was the same size before I got across. We are having some weather; it has rained or snowed every day for a week and I am not very crazy about France from what I have seen and I sure will be glad to get back to old U.S.A. I am sending you a copy of a poem which expresses our thoughts about the drafted men.

Write soon with love to all,
from Private Chas. HAMMERS; H.D. of Co. 168, U.S. Inf. A.E. F.

Only a Volunteer
The 168th Infantry will be forgotten
 In just about a year,
But the records they left behind
 Was that of a volunteer.

Why didn't I wait to be drafted
 And lead to the train by a band
Then put in a claim exemption,
 Oh! Why did I hold up my hand?

Why didn't I wait for the banquet,
 Why didn't I wait to be cheered?
For the drafted men get the credit
 While we only volunteered.

But nobody gave us a banquet,
 And nobody said a kind word,
The puff of the engine and the grind of the wheels
 Was all the goodbye we heard.

And off to the training camp hustled
 To be trained for the next half year.
And in the shuffle forgotten,
 For we were only volunteers.

And perhaps we shed tears as we marched away
 To the foreign fields of strife
And left behind us our happy home s
 And the girl whom we meant for our wife.

But we boys, every one, are glad we are here,

Tho the effort my cost us our lives
Or the coming conquest cost us dear
 We are glad we are volunteers.

But perhaps some day in the future
 When my boy sits on my knee
And asks what I did in the great war
 With his eyes looking up at me.

And I will look back in those eyes
 That at me so trustingly peer
And tell him I wasn't drafted,
 But was only a volunteer.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – March 6, 1918;

Camp Logan, Houston, Texas – Feb. 9, 1918

Dear Editor: As I have the time and pleasure this afternoon, I will drop you and the people of Kinmundy a few lines to inform you that the Kinmundy boys at Camp Logan at the present time are fine and dandy and doing good work for their country. We have been having some real warfare for the past three days. Our company has been out in the trenches and stayed three days and nights. To think of it at home would seem pretty hard, but after you are in there a day or so you get used to it and don't mind it so much. All that is hard is the mud and eats. Of course it had to rain and make it disagreeable for awhile, but we tried to keep from complaining too much. We went over the top in drill and had four attacks of gas. Of course you all know that gas is one of our most deadly weapons when in battle with the Germans, and we are drilled hard on that subject. The gas comes over the trenches in a big yellow cloud and fills them. We have the gas masks, there are signal shots up in the air to warn us that there is going to be a gas attack and we hurriedly put on our masks. There are four or five different kinds of gas and the one they use on us is tear gas; it will not kill, but will give you an idea what the deadly gas is, and that way we are drilled to it.

Well folks, I guess you are tired of so much gas, so I will say that us fellows here in Texas have got it on you for weather. It has been a fine winter here and very little cold weather. I see in the paper where you have had a white blanket most of the winter and some severe cold weather. It is raining here today and we are glad of it for the dust is pretty bad on us. There is a sand storm every week or so that is very disagreeable, otherwise it has been fine down here and we have enjoyed it.

I see by the Marion Co. Express that you have had another fire. It seems like Kinmundy is an unlucky place for fires. I send my sympathy to F.J. NIRIDER and family for I know it was a hard blow on them to lose their beautiful home.

We have a Y.M.C.A. near us so we can get books and many other things that we were used to at home and also have a Bible study once a week, so we keep up to that point as near as we can. There has been a big tabernacle built in the camp and thousands of the boys have been converted. It certainly is grand that this can be done in camp.

Camp Logan is lucky for not having more sickness for the rest of the camps have had their share.

Well dear Kinmundy people, I will close and prepare for mess, for a soldier must not miss that. I do not know when we will sail across the pond, but not before long, so goodbye with the best of success for you.

I remain your funny friend,
Musician Eugene M. CRAIG

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – March 6, 1918;

Somewhere in France; Feb. 4, 1918

Mrs. Maggie PHILLIPS, Kinmundy, Ill.;

Dear Sister,

Received your kind and welcome letter today and was so glad to hear from you and to hear you were all well. This leaves me well and enjoying life with the American Army in France; the boys are full of fun. You asked me if I needed anything, I do not, for we have everything we want here. Is Bert at Iuka yet? I will close for this time and try to write more next time. You can write anything you want for they do not open your letters any more. So goodbye and answer soon.

Loyd PRATTER

Supply Co. 5; F.A. A.E.C.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – March 14, 1918;

Feb. 15, 1918;

Dear Father, Brother and Sisters,

It is just a little over two months since I came to France but it seems ages to me and I know it must seem ever so much longer to you, but you must all be brave and not worry about me. A year ago you never thought that I would be a soldier fighting in a foreign land for our dear old U.S.A, but I know quite well you would rather have me here trying to do my bit, in spite of the loneliness and heartaches it may cause. Of course it is different with me for I am always on the go doing things and great things ahead, while with you there must be ceaseless questions as to my whereabouts and what may happen to me so far away.

My thoughts are always back home and I try to remember and figure the difference in time, that I may better be able to follow the day with you, as I trudge along with never a hint of what may happen to us at the next break of day.

Work is still about the same and I must admit that I have really enjoyed a part of the engineering work here for it has been real interesting and most valuable to our armies and I have been given a good chance to carry out some of the work. I wish it were permissible to tell you about it and for what purpose it is being used, but no, I can't.

I often wonder if by chance you have figured out any places where I have been, but we are moving again real soon, which makes four times since landing in France, so it would be difficult to keep up with me.

I had two long motorcycle trips and was some tired when I returned to camp, due to not being accustomed to motorcycling. It was very interesting for I passed through some very beautiful country which made the trip one of interest as well as business.

Our commanding officer is one of the finest men I have met since enlisting in the army; he certainly is as good as he can be to everyone in his command, besides being a good soldier, a good man, a good Mason, he is very religious and we are all proud to be a member of his organization.

Every city or town that I have seen is always the same; they appear to be very old and are queerly arranged. I happened to be in one city not long ago and saw a famous Cathedral completed about the 12th century. I have also seen the famous tower of Charles VII. There are many things here in or near our camp that I would love to describe but I know I should not so you will have to be satisfied with a few general remarks.

At this time I have received in all about 15 letters and 1 package from the states since I arrived in France; 4 letters from you. You should see the excitement in camp when the truck brings us our mail and the letters are handed out. It sure is the happiest moments for every one to get letters from the dear ones who are some 5000 miles away, for in a way we have of remembering them is by our imagination and letters.

Some people here think that the war will end this year, but I doubt it, at least we can't see any signs of it as yet. Of course we all hope it will for then we can soon be sailing home, and say no more need for letters. I hope that day will be soon for we all want to come home real soon., but not until after peace is declared, for we have caught the spirit and I doubt if a single one would leave until then, for it is so different after you are here.

My trip to the front was full of excitement and interest to me, and wish that I could describe it but can't now, but perhaps some day I can for, well, is still have every hope of returning home after the war is over.

An army engineer has many duties, some easy, some very interesting, some very difficult, for many hardships arise every day, but even at that we have a lot to be thankful for. Our meals are good, even better than one could expect, and everyone has good clothing, rubber boots and raincoats for the rainy weather. We have a Y.M.C.A in camp which affords entertainment for the men, also a good place

for them to loaf, write letters, and one can buy American candies, tobacco and cigarettes, which they all miss more than any other thing.

Some things that we have to buy from the French have gone up in price since the American troops arrived, in fact the prices are outrageous still other things that are not very greatly in demand are cheaper than in the U.S.A., so after all I don't imagine conditions are so much different as to prices. I wish I could tell you a lot of things of a descriptive nature, that I am not allowed to then this letter would be much more interesting.

Remember I hope to come back for I see life ever so much different now. There are many things that I could do with the rest of my days, but if by chance I have crossed the sea to stay, you will know that also will be alright and as big as anything that I could do with my life, and something that you will be able to be just as proud about as if I had lived to fulfill all other hopes that you may have had for me. I am going to do my best to bring you honor, remember that but whatever happens don't worry.

I am in the very best of health and assure you I have no trouble sleeping after a fourteen hour day and often more than that but I don't mind. ___ better far when I am busy., I feel the best. I sincerely hope that you are all well and hope some day this letter will reach you. Give me very best regards to all my friends. Write soon and often. Goodby, with love, Orie.

P.S. I sent you a cablegram the first of the month, hope it reached you.

Lieut. Orie H. WAINSCOTT
Adjutant 501st Engineers N.H.; A.E.F. France

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – March 14, 1918;

Great Lakes, Ill.; Feb. 23, 1918

To the Red Cross Society; Kinmundy, Ill.

I have just received the box from mother containing the sacks donated by your society and wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks for them.

We will no doubt have considerable cold weather up here yet this winter, although right now it is quite warm and springlike. I am sure I will have much need of the socks as we will be out of doors a great deal from now on. I will write just a line about myself since coming to this station. I enlisted at Omaha on November 28th and reported here December 9th, and was at once placed in the detention camp, which is the home of all recruits for the first twenty-one days after their entrance. Those 21 days seemed like as many weeks to us but the last one finally rolled around and we all felt free as birds but our freedom did not last long as three days later we were placed under quarantine and from then on until about two weeks ago we were free for about ten days, so you see we have been greatly handicapped. In spite of all we have done pretty well having finished our period of drilling and instructions in general seamanship preparatory to entering the Radio school which by the way is the branch in which by the way is the branch in which I enlisted.

The station has been pretty crowded and especially the schools so we have been held back on that account, but they are getting them thinned out now and I think we will soon be going ahead unhindered I will no doubt have more to tell then and a better opportunity to write so will close now with best regards to you and all the old friends in Kinmundy.

Sincerely,

Clark E. KLINE
Co. L 1st Reg. Camp Dewey; Great Lakes, Ill.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – March 28, 1918;

A.E.F. France; March 4, 1918

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Rosedale Rebekah Lodge of Kinmundy, Ill.,

Your package just arrive at these headquarters today and it most certainly was a pleasant surprise to know that ones far away had remembered me. It is a pleasure to me to express my appreciation to every member of Rosedale Rebekah Lodge for the useful articles sent. I don't have much time for writing, in fact, have very little leisure, for one can't help sending steel messages to the Kaiser and love notes to friends at home in the same breath.

I understand that it must be much more difficult for our friends at home, for there are the ceaseless questionings of what lies ahead for the ones far away, but for us over here we go steadily forward, because we have been trained that way, always there is excitement and a chance, that spurs us on and time seems to go quickly to us. I have been in France more than 3 months now and it don't seem long in time, but to stop and think how far away I am and how long it has been since I had the pleasure of visiting with you, it seems ages and ages ago, and the only way that I can remember you is by imagination and the sweet remembrance of our good times long ago. Of course I hope to come back and visit you again, but if I do not, it will be all right and you will know that at the great crisis, I tried to play the man and that it was the influence of sisters and brothers of Rosedale lodge that helped to make me ready to do my part and where I go, always you are remembered.

The Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A. and all other organizations are doing everything that they possibly can do to help the American soldier in France. The Y.M.C.A. has erected a building in all camps when permissible and most all men go there for a good time.

I can truthfully say that we have had things as good or even better than one could expect. Of course we have our bumps and off days, such as sleeping in the mud with no fire, wading slush thru rain and snow as onward we go and working nights with a train of ammunition and all that sort of thing, but that is all in the game; but always we have had plenty to eat, warm clothing, rain coats, shoes and boots.

My most tiresome trip was some 500 or 600 miles on a motorcycle without a delay. It didn't take long but under conditions was not very pleasant. Have seem some beautiful country and several interesting as well as historical places and if I could write you a real descriptive letter, I am sure you , it would be much more interesting to all back home. However, I can't tell you about my work or my location, but at the present time we are near a very large city, but won't get to go there often but visit it occasionally.

This thing is so big and dreadful that it does not bear putting down on paper. I read the papers with so many inaccurate accounts, but nevertheless we know we have to a big job and that we've got to carry on, whatever happens, so we wear a stern grin and go to it.

My greatest sorrow over here was the death of First Lieut. Geo. M. ANDERTAN, one of my best friends and I don't think anything ever effected me like his death did, but his memory will always make me a better man.

Someday when I return to the states, I hope to be able to tell you several interesting things and all about the life over here.

Again thanking you all for the remembrance, I must close and get busy for an Adjutant has many duties and not many minutes he can call his own. I am in the best of health and everything is fine with me, but would love to visit you.

Very Sincerely,

1st Lieut. Orie A. WAINSCOTT
Adjutant 501st Engineers N.A. A.E.F. France

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 4, 1918;

Camp Logan, Houston, Texas; March 24, 1918;

Mrs. Mayme BROWN,

I will try and write you a few lines to let you know how us boys are getting along in Texas. We like it fine down here and are in the best of health. We went out on maneuvers Friday and pitched our tents just in time to get out of the rain. Then when it stopped raining we went out patrolling and when we got about two miles from our camp it began raining again and before we could get back we were wet as could be. When we got back to our pup tents the water was about a foot deep. Then we tore down our tents and rolled our blankets and went back to camp. It was the biggest rain I have seen since I have been in Texas. But it didn't hurt us and we did not mind the rain. We are drilling hard all the time, so we will soon be in shape to go to France. We are all anxious to go, but it seems like they are a long time about sending us across. We drill with the bayonet some every day. We practice on dummies made out of wood but it sure teaches us a whole lot about it. Our company is on guard tonight and most of the boys are gone, but I did not have to go on guard this time. I will send you a picture of myself and two BAYLIS boys in this letter. Will try and write more next time.

William LEMAY, Co. G, 130th Inf.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 4, 1918;

Houston, Tex., Camp Logan; March 15, 1918

Dear Father and Mother,

There is no man that hath left houses and lands, or father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife and children, for my sake, and the gospels, who will lose his reward, but shall receive an hundredfold, now, even in this world, lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and in the world to come eternal life.

Looking backward over my life's journey and thinking of the many homes that I have visited, I think of my many friends and the many homes where I can go and be welcome, where I can eat without money or price, and the hundreds of fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters, who would nurse me through sickness, I fell that all these things are mine because I have been brought up by Christian parents who taught me the gospel of liberty which frees me from sin with all its terrors. I never hated sin more than I do today, nor I never loved the things which make up real manhood better. I am human and have not yet reached perfection, but for the victories of the present, I am grateful and I am pressing on toward the goal. I am praying that I may prove worthy of friends and serve God, faithfully. My business shall ever be to so live as to meet the approval of my best friend, Jesus the Christ, and to command Him to others. For our highest service lies in this, that others may catch a glimpse of God through our lives.

I am getting my mail all O.K. now. I am glad that you all rejoice with me in the sacrifice that I am now making hoping that it, may be the means of giving us all many more blessings. I continue to be happy that I am able for this service, but we never know what sorrow may come to us. Let us pray the Father to give us grace to bear up in the midst of adversities. Let us not try to pull into our todays what we may or may not be our tomorrows. May our todays be filled with loving service, then our tomorrows will be joyful and beautiful and our dark valleys will be fewer.

With all the love my soul possesses, I close with a firm faith in God to whom I commend you until it is ours to meet again.

Ransom Deloss BROWN

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 11, 1918;

Fort Riley, Kan.; March 30, 1918

Hello Pearl - Have received two issues of the Marion County Express and sure does seem good to read the news which I read over and over until it is most worn out, not that I'm homesick, but am afraid I might have overlooked something. Well as yet, I am still in Ft. Riley, but is very uncertain for how long as there has been quite a number transferred to several different ports, some to Pennsylvania, Georgia, California, and Washington. Don't know the meaning, but it sounds favorable of a little trip for them across the water, as these are all seaports to which they have been shipped. Some of the boys I came here with went away last week, part that went didn't want to go and part that were left wanted to go. For me I'm satisfied at the best, orders are orders and what they say goes; if they say ship me I know I'll go where I am sent.

The branch I'm in is one of the best branches of the army. It is the Field Hospital and lots of good things in this branch to know; they all tell me it is the most interesting position in the army. Our lieutenant was lecturing us this morning, telling us all the good points and telling us to carry our heads high and look like “honest to God soldiers” as they would have to give us our credits when we play our part, as we are to be first Hospital about five miles back from the firing line, next to the Evacuation Hospital, then the Base Hospital. For that reason we have a lot to learn in regard to nursing and caring for the wounded, so don't think we will leave here for quite a while.

We are taking schooling about 3 hours each day, besides in each tent there is a squad leader, of which I happen to be one, and we are requested to hold school in our tents, teaching anatomy and physiology besides First Aid Work. I am rather a poor teacher, though orders are so one can do things in better shape in the army than elsewhere. I am having a good school in my tent and will have examinations every three weeks.

Besides our schooling we are taught the English and French style of drill and take several hikes, our last being this morning. After our inspection of person and tent quarters by our Lieutenant, we hiked to Funston and the way we went was about eight miles there and back. On my hike this a.m., I learned something which I should have learned years ago and that was that about one-half mile east of our tents stands an old stone building that was the first capitol of the territory of Kansas and known as Pawnee, where the officers of the Civil War held conference and the first fight of the Civil War took place about one-fourth mile east of Pawnee.

The coming week we will spend the most of our time learning to pitch our Field Hospital tents, which when all pitched covers 3 acres of ground, and we are to learn to pitch all this within thirty minutes, and take down and roll up and load in fifteen minutes. Some speed, I guess, but it can be done. There are nine men to a tent, small or large, in doing the job and so it is, at all the tents at the same time. Our company were onlookers the other day to learn. I saw I could be of some help and others and myself raised the largest sized tent in 15 minutes. They should have all been raised in that time, but most of our officers go by instructions of books to know how to raise them and as I had been instructed by our Lieutenant and had seen one raised and had it down pat, I bossed the job besides driving a few stakes and we had it up before any of the rest. By doing so I guess they reported me, for some Lieutenant asked me my name and to what company I belonged, which I told him and on returning to our tents my Lieutenant called me in the office and gave me command over a squad to raise the tents this week. The record on the Field Hospital raising was done by some of Pershings men; they unloaded and raised tents and had water boiling in doctor's apartments in 14½ minutes, also took same down, rolled up, loaded and ready to move in 9 minutes.

Read Gus SPITZE's letter in the Express which was quite interesting, although I see there are a difference in camps, for one thing where there are a small number of men who eat at one place like 180 to the side of 2800 who eat here in one hour (more snap). At the time I read it, I know there were a lot of

things quite different from what we have here. I also saw where John FRENCH and “Bekie” MAHAN, had been made Corporals. Good for them. In our Company are to be 4 Lieutenants, 4 Sergeants, 11 truck drivers and the balance, hospital nurses, and the like. Don’t know what they will make of me, but have as good chance now for Sergeant as anyone in our Company and that is where they come from. There are several things in army life that would make a good subject to write on but as they are getting more familiar with me each day, I don’t know where to start in or what to talk about. One of the finest nights I have seen as last Wednesday when 7000 soldiers marched over the parade ground looking their best, for inspection before the Major. I was with them somewhere, could hardly tell where for looking around, until the band commenced to play which led the whole of us in step, and that was one time when the snap was a little more snappier than usual. Expect you think I am wound up but this is all interesting to me and I like to tell it. You can tell all I am feeling fine and getting fat.

Harvey BROWN;
Field Hospital, Co. B.T. 128; Fort Riley, Kan.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 25, 1918;

“Boys in Service”

The Kinmundy Township Service Flag will be raised on Saturday, Red Cross Day. The stars on this flag will include all the boys getting their mail at Kinmundy postoffice. If there should be any names omitted, will you kindly phone or tell Mrs. J.T. BROWN who will make any correction. As the boys are called, their names will be added to the roster.

The mothers of these boys have given their own. With proud heart and firm smile, she has made the supreme sacrifice of mother – her son. Her patriotism, her loyalty can not be measured; she has given of her hearts blood of her very soul.

If the mothers, fathers and wives have made their sacrifice, if their boys stand there for you and me, don't let anyone be a slacker, but let us help these brave boys win the war and make a better world for us to live in. Read the names of those who are not with us today; would you exchange places with them? Stand by our boys!

VOLUNTEERS

Those who are on the seas:

Dr. Clyde B. CAMERER, Lieut. Com.; Luzon JOHNSON, John EAGAN, Milton HALL, Rudolph KAGY, Berthel McHATTON

The ones in France:

Lieut. Orie WAINSCOTT, Geo. MOTCH; Lieut. Eugene PRUETT, Zon SIMER, Charles HAMMER, Loyd PRATER, Charles WOODS, Joe DOWNS, Edward LOWE, Ben SMITH, Samuel STOKLEY, Carroll A. PYLES

Other Volunteers:

Leonard WILSON, Clyde FOSTER, Charles M. HARVEY, Forest M. HARVEY, Clark KLINE, Leon HANNA, George BARGH, Hobart SEE, Corp. Glen BOUGHERS, Fay LOVELL, Avery BOUGHERS, Alva BAYLISS, Corp. Abe BAYLISS, Bryan ROBB, Chas. HOYT, William LEMAY, Buglar Eugene CRAIG, Herman ANNA, Oswald MILLER, Gus A. SPITZE, Byron E. STOKLEY

In the Draft:

Sarg. Wm. Loyd NEIL, John FRENCH, Corp. J.R. MAHAN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Harvey BROWN, J. Oscar COX, L. Hugh SPENCER, John BRASEL, Sam'l Eli ROBB, Frank KOLB, John BARBEE, Ralph CROSSETT, F.E. HANKENS, Frank McGEE, Rudolph and Raymond SALTNER, Loren and Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Ernest HARRIS, Walter BAYLIS, Monte BRAY, Edgar PARRILL, Orien BUTTS, Walter MILLER, C.L. PERRY, S.A. FELLER, John HENSLEY, Thomas MANGNER, Frank DOOLEN

JOINING THE COLORS

Sixty-nine more Marion county boys are called to go to the training camp and will leave Salem Monday, Apr. 29. This quota will leave for Camp Dix, Wrightstown, New Jersey, said to be one of the best training camps in the country. Following are the ones called outside of Centralia.

SANDOVAL: Benjamin GALYEAN, Worth EAGAN, Nial DAY, Loyd MARVEL, Emory F. SANDERS, Albert PROCARIONE, Leroy KRATZER.

ODIN: Ellsworth DONNELLY, Fred SMITH, Edgar BERRY, Geo. DEADMOND

KINMUNDY: U. COUGHLIN, Wm. Henry GIGER, Milburn JONES, John H. WILSON, Cecil BOUSEMAN, Hubert M. FISHER

IUKA: Hershel HARMON, Clyde PURDUE, James Dee SMITH, James A. ANDERSON

SALEM: Edgar DILG, Isadore A. PIEFFER, John Larimer KAGY

SCATTERING: Sam'l B. PROSISE, Cartter; George HALFACRE, Kell; John C. BRACHNER, Vernon;
Eugene BLACK, Tonti; Francis ROGIER, Patoka; Leslie WOOLSEY, Vernon; John L. HOOTEN, Kell;
Oscar Noble DeFORD, Frank Horejsi, Alma; Fred E. ROBEUR of Greenridge.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 25, 1918;

France, March 17, 1918;

Dear Mother,

I received your letter, also one from Edna and Florence. I got them all the same day so will answer them all at once. Was glad to get the pictures, they sure looked good to me. We are having some fine weather here, being warm enough to go without a coat almost every day. I am sitting out in the yard writing and there is a bunch of fellows sitting out in the yard playing cards without their coats on just like summer time. I am at the same place that I wrote you from last but expect to move in a few days. There is a bunch of Canadians here and it almost like seeing someone from home to see them. About half of them are from the states any way. I have been around people from almost every place but they are the first real men that I have seen since I left the states.

Was sorry to hear that Beak had to leave but it may not be for long and it may be for a good while. Tell Edna if she has any good magazines to send me some. It is pretty hard to get anything to read over here; we only see a paper once in awhile, and never anything else except when some of the fellows get something from home.

There are several big airdomes around here and the planes are almost as thick as birds sometimes. When we first came here, we used to be watching them all the time, but now nobody pays any attention to them except at night when Fritz comes over, then everybody takes notice. You can tell when he is coming for his motor sounds different from the English. Will be glad when the United States gets their machines over here and puts a stop to the raids. Of course, it is perfectly all right for them to get us, but it is pretty tough killing women and children who are taking no part in this war at all, but I have seen enough of this work to know that there is nothing too mean for them to do. Everything I saw about them in the papers was true; if anything, the facts are worse than are reported, but don't think it will be a great while until they will have to pay for what they have done, as far as it is possible to pay. It will be a long time before this country is back to where it was before the war, if it ever is. I am glad we came into it, for if Fritz had won our time might have come next and the way it is now, it is only a matter of time until they will be put in a position where they will never be able to repeat their performance here. Tell all the kids to write.

Love to all,

George MOTCH, Co. D, 6th Engineers, A.E. F.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – April 25, 1918;

Somewhere in France;
Mrs. Maggie PHILLIPS;

Dear Sister,

I received your kind and welcome letter today and was glad to hear from you and to know all was well. At the present I am quite well. Well sister, you want to know why I do not write oftener, but I can't write like I did back in the states. I had a letter from Charles the other day and a birthday present from Addie. I sure did have a good time on my birthday this year.

Tell mother that I am well and fat as a pig. She will receive \$20 per month from me from the 11th of February on until the war ends and I think that will be in a few months. I will close for this time. Answer soon.

To all good bye.

Loyd PRATER, 5 F.A. Supply Co., A.E.F.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – May 2, 1918;

France, March 29, 1918;

Mrs. J.F. DONOVAN, Ladies of the Red Cross, Women’s Club and Fellow Citizens of Kinmundy, Ill.,

Dear Friends – I wish to thank you and all for remember me in so many ways. I received candy at Christmas time from the Womans Club, a dandy warm sweater just before I left the states and many good friendly words at different times. Everybody seems extra good to me and to all the U.S. soldiers. All but the Heathen Huns and we’ll either pound some sense into them or pound the life out of them before we are thru.

All the boys are extra strong for the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A. You cannot realize how much good they have done for the boys. One can see Red Cross flags on sox, gloves, sweaters, helmets, comforts and any other thing that would give comfort to a boy. Comforts for mind, soul and body and the big red “Y” triangle is always seen the first thing in every camp. The first thing we saw when we docked at England was a long counter where we could get hot coffee and buns and may be you think we did not go for lunch stand. The big “Y” triangle and circle over a money exchange and coffee for an English penny and a fat graham bun for one penny. American or U.S. money. A feed for 4 c. If we could get at the German’s food supply, we could eat enough to starve them out in a week’s time. Sea breeze and English rations on the boat made the boy eat like hounds. We passed thru a part of England and all the boys say it is the most beautiful country they ever saw. We got to a camp in the middle of the night but it was not too dark to see a circle and triangle - oh there’s a big “Y”, the boys all know Uncle Sam is looking after his boys. When we got to France and marched to a camp we sighted a “Y” about the first thing. We passed thru some pretty country and some where the poor peasants live. The trains in England and France are the small compartments with side door entrance, only room for 8 men, and the engines look like toys but make fairly good time. When we arrived at the camp, the Y was right here with a hearty welcome for all. Last night they had a fine entertainment, violin and piano music, singing, a good talk, and a good sketch artist. Something every night and services on Sunday and always plenty of writing paper, etc. and soldiers mail does not even need a stamp. If anyone ever says anything against the Red Cross, Y.M.C.A., or Uncle Sam, have him see a doctor and pity him as a poor grouch.

The trip across the water was O.K., the boat was large enough and the sea calm enough so only the real land lubbers got sea sick. I did not even get dizzy, but I had crossed one ocean before. Did not see a sign of a submarine so outside of a few boat drills did not have very much excitement. One time when it was real dark I was on deck and saw a big black wave with a crest of foam and my imagination worked enough so I thot it was a sub just going down cutting the water with the periscope. I got an idea that it would not be an impossible just to scare Edward R. I was like some fellow said, “For a few seconds my heart got down behind my liver, then jumped up so I had to clear my throat and take a deep breath.”

One time when we were just leaving England and it got too foggy to travel, the anchor was lowered and the chain made such a noise that almost one hundred men grabbed their life belts and started for the upper deck, thinking that a torpedo was coming straight thru. It was a funny sight.

The time we spent coming from England on a cattle boat with the rest of the army mules was not altogether pleasant, but I seem to thrive on canned corn beef and my teeth are good so I got the hard tack where it did me the most good and got a winks of sleep in my stall the same the way the mules got theirs so I am like a good mules do not kick. Some of the boys who were grumbling accuse me of being happy but I see not need of keeping quiet when there is no order against laughing and Mr. and Mrs. W.W. never had any trouble over a few laughs and smiles, so I am not worrying.

I saw some grave stones in England date 176 – 198 – 207 and etc. which seemed like a long time ago to me. Saw an old stone crucifix built in the side of a wall said to be made by one of the apostles and part of a church build in 900.

Have been in two French towns and everything seems old fashioned and I do not understand anything they say, so cannot do much but look. Five centimes make once cent so one can have a lot of money and then have little. I got an English pound changed into French money so got lots of Francs and centimes but still have little real money.

We have all kinds of airplanes here so get to see all kinds of flying, but there is only one place that I would really like to fly and that is Kinmundy, Ill. If I could fly in some evening I could tell all the people where I had been and the name of 'owns and etc.' and Illinois in peace is better than England, France and all the travels.

Thank all the good people in Kinmundy and tell them I do not kick on what I get in the army, and will not kick any if peace is declared. Here's hoping.

Your friend,

Edward R. LOWE
147 Aero Squadron; A.E.F. France, via N.Y.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – May 2, 1918;

In active service. With the American Expeditionary Force. Somewhere in France.

Mrs. E. HAMMER,

Dear Aunt – I want to let you know I am still alive and well. I got a letter from you about 2 weeks ago and you said you had sent me some packages but I did not get them. I wish I had for we sure do get hungry for sweet things. I got the package from Mrs. BROWN and was glad to get it. I still have the New Testament that she gave me before I left Illinois and I carry with me all the time; tell her I will write to her just as soon as I get time.

How is Lloyd and what is he doing? I have not heard from Paul for a long time. They censor our letters so we cannot tell what we are doing or where we are, so it makes it hard for us to write an interesting letter, so I will close hoping to hear from you soon.

I remain your nephew,

Private Charles HAMMER
H.D. of 60168 V Inf.; A.E.F. via New York

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – May 23, 1918;

The list of names following represent the boys from Kinmundy who have answered the call for service for their government. Readers who know of any others not listed or learn of the arrival in France of any of these will please notify the Express that they may be properly classified.

VOLUNTEERS

Marines:

Dr. Clyde B. CAMERER, Lieut. Com.; Luzon JOHNSON, John EAGAN, Milton HALL, Rudolph KAGY, Berthel McHATTON, Jesse JONES

In France:

Lieut. Orie WAINSCOTT, Lieut. Eugene PRUETT, Loyd PRATER, Zon E. SIMER, George MOTCH, Charles HAMMERS, Charles WOODS, Joe DOWNS, Edward LOWE, Ben SMITH, Samuel STOKLEY, Carroll A. PYLES, Corp. Glenn E. PARKER

In Training Camps:

Leonard WILSON, Clyde FOSTER, Charles M. HARVEY, Forest M. HARVEY, Dewey M. MAXWELL, Clark KLINE, Leon HANNA, George BARGH, Corp. Glen BOUGHERS, Avery BOUGHERS, Hobart SEE, Corp. Abe BAYLIS, Alva BAYLIS, Bryan ROBB, Chas. HOYT, Buglar Eugene CRAIG, William LEMAY, Herman ANNA, Oswald MILLER, Gus SPITZE (honorably discharged), Byron E. STOKLEY, Fay LOVELL

Drafted Men (In Training Camps):

Sarg. William L. NEIL, Corp. John FRENCH, Corp. J. Raymond MAHAN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Oscar COX, John BRASEL, L. Hugh SPENCER, Samuel Eli ROBB, Frank KOLB, James Harve BROWN, John BARBEE, Ralph CROSSET, F.E. HANKINS, Frank McGEE, Rudolph SALTNER, Raymond SALTNER, Ben BUTTS, Loren KLINE, Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Earnest HARRIS, Oscar CHANCE, Walter BAYLIS, Monte BRAY, Orville E. GARRETT (honorably discharged), Edgar PARRILL, Orien BUTTS, Walter MILLER, C.L. PERRY, S.A. FELLERS, John HENSLEY, Thomas MANGNER, Edwin WALKER, Warren SMITH, Harry WILKE, Earl WILKE, Murray JONES (hon. Discharged), Hubert FISHER, Milburn JONES, John H. WILSON, Cecil BOUSEMAN, Frank DOOLEN, William GREEN, Bernie BAILEY, Paul ROSWELL, Earl ARNOLD, _____ PROUDFOOT

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – May 23, 1918;

France, April 21, 1918;

Dear Father, Brother and Sisters:

I answered Ciella's letters several days ago and just received one from Ren and Effie today, both dated March 27 so you see letters come any old way over here. I always feel when I write a joint letter to you that I am cheating each one, but it is so very difficult to get the time to write as often as I would like and as usual, the news is all that is lacking to make my letter interesting, for the things I may write you are not those that you really want to know, while the things that we are doing, the kind of work, how I employ my time, what part of the country we are in, etc. are just the things that I am not allowed to write.

Of course you know that I am Adjutant and while my duties are numerous, you know it deals with orders, reports, records, and many other things too numerous to mention. I will give you just a few details of a day for an Adjutant, starting by arising at reveille 5:45 a.m., fall in at assembly, breakfast 6:15, give truck master order 6:30, see after sanitary conditions at camp, open all mail and telegrams about 7 a.m. between phone calls, go to another camp 5 miles away, of which we are in charge, get things going over there, ordering material supplies, gasoline and oil, then answer correspondence, write orders, and check pay rolls, by that time retreat has sounded and still you are not through, reports to make, someone wants me on the phone, someone wants a truck, mail to be censored, O yes, tomorrow the special convenes, more orders, and then the lights go out, 10:00 p.m., and we hit the hay, all this time five men have been busy pounding the keys of Underwood typewriters, then tomorrow the same thing over only maybe you have to meet a midnight train.

The one thing that I can tell you about this part of the country is that they have the finest quality of mud that there is in the whole world. Since we have had a lot of rain lately and there has not been any real sunshine for several weeks to dry things out, we wade around in a sea of mud, as we are well supplied with hip boots things are not so bad. The one peculiarity of the mud here is about every time you step you carry a couple of lbs. with you.

Just got back; ever so often Fritz has to cause trouble and then of course he has to be cooled down a notch or two, but 'tis fine to be here and we do have a lot of fun along with our hard daily grind, such as not to be able to wash, not to be able to sleep to have to be wet and cold for a long period of time, to find mud on your person, sleep in mud and then continue to smile – that's what tests one's courage. But the boys are splendid they are not idiots that some war correspondents depict from day to day. They are perfectly sane, and understand what we are up against, still they carry with them a good natured smile and determination to win, yes, we are going to win; maybe I won't hear that band as we march on to Berlin, yet I hope I will, anyway it will be that way, time will tell, of course we all wonder how long, but no one doubts the results. War is utterly destructive, but it helps create courage and finds the soul man, and yet there is one quality that will survive the war and help us to face the temptations of peace, that same courage most of us have unconsciously discovered out here.

I hear music at the Y, men are singing. I am sitting here by the fire writing, but the song takes me back to Illinois, for they are singing old familiar hymns, which cause my mind to drift back in the time when I was a child back home with you dear father, still I guess I am as much a little boy as ever, for I still feel the need of your good opinion and love. I love to picture you all when you receive my letters, would like to see you when my photo arrives, but I know you can not be any more pleased than I am when I receive a letter from home.

The same mail that brought me your last letter, brought several others also a package of sweets from a friend in Iowa.

I don't want you to worry about me for I can only continue to assure you that I am perfectly well and as happy as can be expected so far from home and while on the subject of worry don't worry about

the water I drink; the government has done that worrying for you, for it is against orders to drink any water except that which is in the "Lister Bags", and which has been prepared for drinking purposes.

My main drink is coffee, just think a few months ago, I never cared for coffee, now I drink black coffee three times a day, but when peace is declared and I get home, no more coffee, for I expect to drink sweet cilk (only).

I guess this new rule about sending parcels will hurt me about as bad as anyone, for though most anyone receives some packages, there are few that I receive any more than I. Just how the new rule will work out remains to be seen, but I trust say that it strikes me as rather hard on us over here for as it takes about two months for an exchange of letters, it seems to me that this is a long time to ask anyone to wait to receive anything, still it may be all right, one can never tell, again it is much more pleasant to receive a package without knowing it's contents at least I think so.

Sunday of all days is one when I remember you most, a year ago my weekend visits home from Chicago, my but those were the days, how well I remember. You are now eating dinner, I have made calculations for a difference in time. You are no doubt thinking and saying one year ago I was with you. I often think of those days and I will be glad when peace is declared and there will be no more reveille, no more worry, but until then I must do my best, my very best, for that is why I came.

I am going to dinner tonight at one of the nicest places in France. French people by the name of Mr. and Mrs. PITLUYT, at least I expect to go; I seldom get away from Camp long enough for anything like that, but the Colonel and Major insist that I go today and I am sure that I will enjoy it.

No doubt this letter is very much disconnected, but don't blame me, blame the Kaizer, for I have been 3 days trying to assemble this letter but have been interrupted so many times by telephone calls and other duties that I haven't had much luck writing letters, have almost forgotten when I started.

Talk about styles, see some very loud ones in some of the cities, but after all they are very similar to the ones back in the states. In this immediate section one finds many poorer people and poorly dressed, wearing wooden shoes.

Talking about newspapers, one does not get very much real information from a newspaper, I mean reliable dope and yet I can't tell you. I am always ashamed that my letters contain so little real, real news, but this thing is so big and dreadful, that I can't put it on paper for if I did the letter would probably never reach you.

We have three lieutenants in the hospital so that makes it all the more difficult for the rest of us in this organization.

Some day I hope I will come back and tell you all about the exciting times over here, all about our work and the great privilege to be able to help end this awful war, not from any personal aim for that doesn't count, just the idea to be able to do my bit.

I hope all are well and getting along just fine. This leaves me in the very best of health, and I feel much better than ever before, and life is really worth living in spite of the war.

Remember to write often, for it is ripping to be remembered and letters help make us more cheerful and keeps us civilized. I must get busy on some work for I want to go out tonight if possible.

I hope the war will be over in one more year, so I am composing menus of the meals I will eat when I get back home.

Pour le moment, simplement, au revoir

With love,

Orie H. WAINSCOTT

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – May 23, 1918;

France; April 8, 1918;

Dear Folks,

I have been so busy working and having a good time that I do not believe I have written a letter this month. Can hardly realize that the U.S. have been in the war a year already and it is getting to be such a business that it does not really seem like war to me. If I was as close-up to the enemy as some of our friends, I guess I'd think very different and have less time for sight-seeing. If a shell came over with my name on it, I would not be able to even tell what a sight it was. Our officers advised us to see all we could and write as often as we liked but say as little as possible so if I give you a guess work letter or you get one with a few lines marked out, just remember Safety First. I'll tell you all the names of places and full particulars just as soon as I get home which will be just as soon as I can. I will not stop for any hesitation waltz or any monkey business when I get the peace note song finished, I'll join in good and strong on “It's home boys, home, it's home you ought to be.”

Easter Sunday, I heard the best Easter sermon or talk the Y that I ever heard. It was a true talk, wish you all could have heard it. I was kept quite busy of days all thru the week, but went to the Y nearly every night and enjoyed myself. Had pictures, talks, and a fine musical concert. Am getting some good experience on different kinds of airplane motors. Some of them are quite different from any I ever saw in the states. I go to work at regular time, quit at a given time and eat as often as I get a chance and chances are pretty good only there seems to be many others who feel the same symptoms at the same time, so I often have to stand in line for 30 minutes or more before eating and half that long before I can wash my mess outfit. I feel like I had been asleep about 20 minutes only when first call goes every morning. You know how it is, spring fever is not so bad but it is very common and seems almost bad sometimes.

Yesterday (Sunday), I did not have to work, but some of the men had to work. War is not a Sunday school game. I got a pass to town and went all through a very old cathedral, one of the oldest and most renowned in this part of the country, so I have heard. I climbed a winding stairs which led to the top, 15 times the stairs winds around bringing you 400(?) feet above the ground. I stopped for a little time at the belfry where there were two large and four small bells made of bronze, looked extra heavy, and the one that was ringing shook the whole tower. When I reached the highest landing, the top, and walked around I saw a man with one hand on the stone banister wall looking down at the ground. He asked “Do I just imagine it or is this tower swaying to the movement of that bell?” I told him I thot it was swaying quite a bit. The view was so grand that we forgot all about the tower. Beautiful stream running along on one side not far distant passing under an old stone bridge. Right near us on another side was one of the most beautiful trees I ever saw, kind of an evergreen with the widest spread of branches that one would think possible and the ground under it was covered with a kind of ivy which looked like a large green disc, as a base for the tree. The buildings all covered with blue slate and having red clay or tile chimneys; and wooded hills off in the distance, with grassy slopes thrown in. I'm telling you it was wonderful. Some one with real command of the English would tell you it was magnificent.

Down inside the church was a large painting about 18 or 20 feet square showing Joan of Arc mounted on her beautiful white horse. She has on her coat of mall and is leading her army. The picture show the street at the point where it passes the cathedral I was in. Grand. I saw a number of fine pictures and images in the church but those of Joan of Arc seem to be the grandest. The art museum which I went thru makes the art institute in Chicago look like a kindergarden. Many of the paintings were made hundreds of years ago.

I had a merchant send you a small souvenir, mama. Hope you get it. We cannot send letters, cards and souvenirs from any city. The censors of our own squadron must look at our mail. If any city

address is given you do not write it or expect me to repeat it. We are not telling the names of places. We'll come out when we get ready.

Had a fine supper at the Y restaurant; (4 F) 8oc and hear an excellent talk, then walked back to barracks about 4 K, 5 h or 4 mi. That is one of the reasons I did not write this yesterday. I hope this is all approved by the board of censors and you get it soon and answer sooner.

Edward R. LOWE
147 Aero Sqdn.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – June 13, 1918;

April 24, 1918; U.S.S.C. 80

Dear Aunt and Uncle;

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still alive. We have been on the sea for ten days and there is no land in sight yet but we hope to get there in a few more days. We have had fine weather ever since we left but tonight the old Atlantic Ocean is rather rough, so excuse this bum writing for this Sub Chaser is trying to stand on her head. I have not received any mail since I left the U.S. and that been near a month.

After we complete this two thousand mile trip we have another thousand miles before we are over there. Crossing the Atlantic on a 110 ft. ship is by no means a pleasure trip. It looks very much like a storm tonight. All I can see is clouds.

There are many ships in the fleet that is going our way and as yet we have not seen any submarines, but we have been in the war zone for the last two days.

Well Aunt will finish this letter just as soon as I get to shore for I am sure anxious to see some more land.

This is April 25 and no land in sight. The sea has been very rough for the past 24 hours, but it has begun to calm down. It rained last night and altogether the weather was very disagreeable but tonight is somewhat moderate.

There is not much excitement in the war zone just at the present time.

They say that the Spanish language only is spoken at the next place we stop, and after that it will be all French and I hope I will meet some of the Kinmundy boys when I get over there.

Today is Thursday and it is sure a gloomy one. I feel rather tired or lazy. I suppose the censor will get tired of reading this letter but - I should worry.

April 26 – Nothing doing on land yet and sea, it very calm and the weather is like summer. We had pancakes this morning for breakfast and every one ate a good portion. We have plenty of smokes with us as our captain gave the drew forty thousand cigarettes before we left the States. Some sport, I'll say, he is.

It has begun to look like rain again tonight and the sea is getting a bit rough but it has been smooth all day.

Well this is April ___ and we reached land yesterday evening, I went ashore last night and I like the place fine though I can't speak their language. There are many liquor houses here and the drinks are served by girls who call themselves Bar Maids. Wine is sold at three cents a glass.

The island is thirty seven miles long and 8 miles wide. The weather here is never cold. The scenery is very nice and they grow lots of pineapples and oranges. Pineapples here are worth about five cents each.

I don't think we will be here long but I like it fine. It is raining here today but it is warm. Our next trip will be about a thousand miles and then I hope we are finished for a while. Well must close for this time so goodbye to all and write soon.

As ever, your loving nephew.

M.L. HALL

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – June 13, 1918;

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In Training Camps:

Leonard WILSON, Clyde FOSTER, Charles M. HARVEY, Forest M. HARVEY, Dewey M. MAXWELL, Clark KLINE, George BARGH, Corp. Glen BOUGHES, Oswald MILLER, Gus SPITZE (honorably discharged), Fay LOVELL, Forrest MOTCH

Drafted Men – In Training Camps:

Sarg. William L. NEIL, Corp. John FRENCH, Sarg. J. Raymond MAHAN, James Harve BROWN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Oscar COX, John BRASEL, Samuel Eli ROBB, Frank KOLB, John BARBEE, Ralph CROSSET, F.E. HANKINS, Frank McGEE, Rudolph SALTNER, Raymond SALTNER, Ben BUTTS, Loren KLINE, Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Earnest HARRIS, Oscar CHANCE, Walter BAYLIS, Monte BRAY, Orville E. GARRETT (honorably discharged), Edgar PARRILL, Orien BUTTS, Walter MILLER, C.L. PERRY, S.A. FELLER, John HENSLEY, Thomas MANGNER, Edwin WALKER, Warren SMITH, Harry WILKE, Earl WILKE, Murray JONES (hon. discharged), Hubert FISHER, Milburn JONES, John H. WILSON, Cecil BOUSEMAN, Frank DOOLEN, Paul ROSWELL, Earl ARNOLD, Bernie BAILEY, William GREEN, Fred Hubert, Wallace HULTS, Eugene REINHART, Earl COURSON, Thomas D. NEAVILL, Charlie CONANT, William HARRIS, Robert GREEN.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – June 13, 1918;

U.S. Naval Forces; European Waters; U.S.S. Dale Base Mine.

Dear Home Folks: I will now endeavor to write you a few lines in reply to your welcome letter which I just received. My ship went out to sea immediately after getting your letter so therefore I had to wait until we back before I could answer it. All of our mail has been held over in England for two months so I began to get rather anxious to hear from home again. I am writing this on board the ship and using a dirty box for my desk and the ship is so crowded it makes it rather a hard matter to write. I have been on duty pretty steady here of late. In emergency cases we have to work pretty hard. But that don't last so very long.

We sure get all we can eat. We have meat twice a day and a good fresh steak once a week, all kinds of vegetables consisting of Irish and sweet potatoes, green beans, turnips, radishes, tomatoes, onions and cabbage. So you see we don't starve.

I guess you people are picking strawberries now. They have some here, but they don't taste as good as what is raised in the U.S. They sell for 75c a pound here. I sure wish I was home so I could get some shortcake.

I have lots of news I would like to tell you people but I can not for all of my letter is censored. Don't be uneasy about me, we are making it fine over here. Say I am looking for a package of gum, and I am about out of tobacco again. I am sending you our Navy paper, it will give you an idea of what Navy life is.

I will close as it is time to go to bed, hoping this will find you all well, as it leaves me feeling fine.

I remain your loving son,

Bert McHATTON;
U.S.S. Dale

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – June 20, 1918;

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“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – June 20, 1918;

Dear Mother and all,

Will now take time to answer your letter and hope it will find you well as it leaves me in best of health and happy as a tack. How are all the rest and tell them hello for me. Have you heard from Earl lately and how and where is he? Well mother, I am getting along fine in this country and like it very much. Everything is nice and green and we boys get all we want plenty to eat and wear, so don't worry about me for I am all right.

Where is Bert and how is Robert getting along with the mules? Tell him I have four nice big ones and ask him if he will trade and now. How is Adeline and who is her best friend? Hope he is not a soldier boy for they can not be trusted. I received my birthday present and I think it is fine.

Mother, I have made an allotment to you of \$20 on Feb. 11 and you will receive \$10 per month from the government making \$30 in all.

I met Fred BANESTER from Kent, Mo. about two months ago, well and happy. He is in the First Ammunition Train doing good. Tell Dad I said hello and not to work too hard and it won't be long till I will be back to help him. It is about time to go to bed so I will say good bye and good luck to all.

Your loving son,

Floyd PRATER

Supply Co., 5 Field Artillery; A.E.F. France

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 4, 1918;

At Sea; U.S.S.C. 80; May 22

Dear Aunt and Uncle;

I will drop you a few lines to let you know that I am well. We have left port and we are on our way to another place.

We were out on a submarine chaser just before we left and it proved very successful. Those two German subs will never sail again.

We have not seen land for several days. The Ocean was rather rough but this sea is very calm.

We expect to reach our next port in a few days and then I will mail this.

I received my first mail just before we sailed and there was one letter from you. It was dated March 29 and I received it May 16. We only stay in one place a few days for we are in active service all the time now. I wish that this war was over and I could be back in Chicago for Sherman was sure right when he said that War is Hell.

I do not think very much of Europe and it does not compare at all with the U.S. I left the U.S. Easter Sunday and it seems years since.

I am, as ever, your loving nephew,

M.L. HALL

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 4, 1918;

Somewhere in France;

Miss Kate and Betty ATKINS; Kinmundy, Ill.;

Dear Friends,

I will answer the welcome letter which I received from you just before I left the U.S.A. I surely was glad to hear from you and that all was well.

This leaves me doing nicely except that I am home sick for some good church service. It has been several months since I was to Sunday School or preaching service, but I never can forget the good times we enjoyed at home church even in the thick of the fight over here, the memory will be sweet. The people do not realize what they are missing by neglecting the religious side of life while at home, but they would notice it here.

We are located in a place about the size of Kinmundy but there are no Y.M.C.A.'s or Protestant Churches here. I have a church paper I have been carrying with me. I read in it when ever I have time. Guess I will have to do like Abraham Lincoln, memorize it after while. Of course, I have a Testament with me.

Well, I remember the last Sunday at Kinmundy. I hope and pray that God will see fit to end this war within the next few months. I have not forgotten my vows to God and my thots always look forward to the future when my aim may be accomplished.

We are located in billets at present. We spend the day mostly in drilling and detail work. We are associated a great deal with the British Tommies; and the French soldier seems to be rather scarce here for some reason.

Everything is so quaint here. One scarcely ever sees a young Frenchman, mostly old men and boys. It is the work of grim war.

When we first arrived here we had to give away most of our clothing as we could not carry it on our back. Of course we could have it stored it away but some will never live to reclaim it, it is quite probable. There were scores of families in need in that vicinity, so we gave it to them. One article I kept was a sweater my mother made.

I suppose you see my folks quite often. It may be a short time and yet quite a while before I see home again. The war seems to be at a crisis now.

I suppose the folks at home are worried considerable about my welfare. We sent mail several days ago but we had been instructed wrong as to the address so two sacks were returned.

I will close hoping you will write again.

Your Brother in Christ Jesus,

Hobart SEE

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 4, 1918;

Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ohio; June 23

Dear Folks at Home,

I received your letter Saturday night at 9 o'clock. Just got back from a hike at that time, although was not tired as we rode in trucks. The distance was 18 miles east of Chillicothe out in some of the worst hills I ever saw. The place we were camped at was at an old Artillery Range. We had 2 bigguns while out there. Nothing killed but snakes and rattlers at that. A fellow killed one with 11 rattles. I killed one with 6 rattles, a black diamond too.

I have been promoted to a signalman and am going to school all the time. We have all kinds of signals, hand flags, flash light, wigwag, telegraph, telephone, wireless and a ton more and I am trying to learn all of them.

We also had two aeroplanes with us. They were up all day, going back and forth over us and signaling to us and we would answer by wireless.

Say, did you ever see a wireless station? Well I have put them up. The kind we use can be put up in ten minutes and we sure can hear that station in New York and Arlington, I think it is very plain. I have not tried the wireless yet, don't know the code well enough to receive.

Well, how are you folks at home? I am all right. I do not have to drill near as hard as I did. Only get one hour of Infantry drill each day now and less than that some days.

I am going to try for a pass to come home about the Fourth, but am afraid I will not get it. One can never tell what he will get in the Army.

The P.B.I. (Poor Bloody Infantry) is getting it good and hard these days and all of us for that matter. We don't get any more holidays except Sunday and then we are sometimes on a hike.

We began to wear gas masks last Monday one hour each day. Talk about torture, I do not believe there could be any worse. It does not make any difference what we are doing if a soldier in Camp Sherman – we must wear our gas mask one hour each day. It looks funny to see cooks and kitchen police wearing their masks at work but let me tell you it don't feel funny. The officers wear them just the same as we privates.

Am at the Y – must close – don't look for me as it is hard to get off.

P.S. Say Ma. I don't suppose you thought when you was a girl in Ohio that your son would go over the same ground as a soldier. But one never can tell. I never thought of it before myself until it really happened, but mother, you can be assured that I will not dishonor the old stomping grounds of your girlhood.

Well Dad, how are you? I hope all right. Don't worry about me. Just think of the thousands of other fathers that have two, three, and four boys in the service. And I think if a fellow is of the right kind of stuff he will learn something – how to appreciate a home for Camp is a long way from home.

There are thousands of boys at this minute wishing for home. But we have a duty to perform and we are going to do it, with all the man we have in us.

John J. BRASEL; Co. I 335 Infantry

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 4, 1918;

France; May 30, 1918

Dear Father, Brother and sisters,

Today is Memorial Day and as far as possible, no one is doing anything. It is a day of rest and we had some exercise, music and drill. I am enclosing a copy of the order giving us a day of rest.

Some friends from near the camp visited us and stayed for lunch. We enjoyed having them for they are the finest people I have met in France. I shall send you their photograph someday.

It has been an ideal day, and we have all enjoyed it ever so much. While I had to do some work myself, I had more time than usual. I was out with our friends for a couple of hours and it sure seemed good to have that pleasure for tomorrow I know we will be over busy and have a lot of work to do.

Everything looks worse and worse, but we hope the tide will soon change.

I wish I could have been at home today, as I was two years ago. I am sure I would have enjoyed it and I hope you had a pleasant day.

Not much news to write but I wanted you to know I had a very pleasant day. Am well and getting along fine. Think about everyone at home just heaps, and hope next year, I will be with you. Hope all is well. Must go now.

With Love,

Orie WAINSCOTT; 51 Engineers

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Leonard WILSON, Clyde FOSTER, Charles M. HARVEY, Forest M. HARVEY, Dewey M. MAXWELL, Clark KLINE, Q.M. Sarg. George BARGH, Corp. Glenn BOUGHES, Oswald MILLER, Gus SPITZE (honorably discharged), Fay LOVELL, Forrest MOTCH, Gordon LOWE, Harry NEIL, Ray HAMILTON, Ray HARGRAVES, Ray WHITE, Pleasant ROBNETT, Ted MILLER, Forrest SEE

Drafted Men In Training Camps:

Sarg. William L. NEIL, John FRENCH, Sarg. J. Raymond MAHAN, James Harve BROWN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Oscar COX, John BRASEL, Samuel Eli ROBB, Frank KOLB, John BARBEE, Ralph CROSSET, F.E. HANKINS, Rudolph SALTNER, Raymond SALTNER, Ben BUTTS, Charles SUKOW (hon. discharged), Loren KLINE, Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Earnest HARRIS, Oscar CHANCE, Walter BAYLIS, Monte BRAY, Orville E. GARRETT (honorably discharged), Edgar PARRILL, Orien BUTTS, Walter MILLER, C.L. PERRY, Thomas MANGNER, Edwin WALKER, Warren SMITH, Harry WILKE, Earl WILKE, Murray JONES (hon. discharged), John H. WILSON, Frank DOOLEN, Paul ROSWELL, Earl ARNOLD, Bernie BAILEY, William GREEN, Fred Hubert, Wallace HULTS, Eugene REINHART, Earl COURSON, Thomas D. NEAVILL, Charlie CONANT, William HARRIS, Robert GREEN, Reuben CRANE, George MILLER, Omer READNOUR, William B. HAMMER, Ira D. COMBS, Ellis DUNN, Francis Marion FARRIS, Cecil PLUE, Wm. MEYER, Edgar SPICER, Willis F. PYLES

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 18, 1918;

Somewhere in France; June 11, 1918;

Dear Sister,

Will answer your letter that I received some time ago. Was very glad to hear from you. How is Jimmie getting along and yourself. I hope you are enjoying life and having a good time. How is mother and all of the folks by now. What is the rumor of the war? Well I am having a good time. You ought to see me now. I made the voyage fine coming over. We are having fine weather over here. The fields are pretty and green and there are a lot of pretty girls over here but I can't talk to them. You ask me if this place was pretty as old U.S.A. Well I guess not. I would much rather live there than here. The place is very nice but I could not begin to compare with us, for I don't think they are as healthy looking as our people. Well I have not received a letter for so long that I don't know what one would look like. I received your letter which you wrote back in the states. Well sister, I haven't very much to tell you now, but just wait until I get back. Will close with love.

From your brother,
Maj. Carrol A. PYLES
121 Bn French Art, Bat. C.A.E.F.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 18, 1918;

Camp Mills, N.Y.; June 30, 1918

Dear Folks,

I arrived here yesterday about 4 o'clock and it is sure a fine camp what I have seen of it. We were 52 hours on the road from Camp Wadsworth. We came through Philadelphia. The Red Cross was there and gave us lunch, iced tea, and cigarettes. The Red Cross sure treats us fine at all the stops we have made. We were in Washington D.C. two hours, and were served to lunch by President Wilson's wife.

She also gave each soldier a checkerboard and dominoes. We went from there to Baltimore, Md., and then to New York City where we took a boat to Brooklyn. We were on the boat three hours and then took a Pennsylvania train for camp which is 20 miles from New York. This is a fine looking country. We had a fine bed on the train Pullman sleeper; we were on there two nights. I haven't heard from anyone except Lewis ROBB and Walter MILLER. Walter is at Camp Sherman in Ohio. Our mail will be sent from Camp Wadsworth to here. We haven't had any pay yet and haven't drilled any for three weeks but won't drill any here. I think we will stay here about two weeks and then xxxxx. Air ___ are making so much noise I can't think of any thing to write. I saw the largest building in the U.S.A. and Wall Street and other things. How is everything and everybody? I am fine and dandy. There were 45,000 ___ this camp last week going across the water. We were not allowed to tell anything about where we were going while we were on the train. Good bye.

Bernie BAILEY

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 18, 1918;

Co. A 54 Inf. Reg. No. 418, 377 A.E.F.

Dear Folks,

I think by now you may be wondering why I don't write but all the rest of the people I write to are just as bad off as you in that respect for this is the first letter I have written since we landed over here. I have started to write several times and really sent one letter at the port where we landed to you folks but it was returned as I had too much on the outside of the envelope. I am wiser now, though so I think this will pass the censor all right.

I have seen a large part of northern France and I am pleased in some ways with it and in other ways I am slightly disappointed. It is a beautiful country and seems to be pretty rich soil but the fields are not much larger than our new orchard and many of them smaller. The methods of farming seem very crude to me but the crops seem to grow good in spite of that. I saw some of the finest rye here I believe I ever saw and the clover grows very nice but I sure miss the fields of corn. I haven't seen a stalk of corn since I have been here and only two hogs and they appeared to be the old hazel splitter variety; big, high-backed animals with hair on them like a curry brush. There are some fine cattle.

We have been in several different towns so far and each looks pretty much like the other. You may write to me at the same company and regiment but add American E.F. via New York. All the towns have the same narrow streets, the same plaster and brick houses, the same bunch of jabbering people. I suppose though if we could get their opinion of our talk, it would be the same that I have of theirs. I can't talk to the people any yet except to ask for a few things such as milk, bread, butter, water, wine and cigarettes. I can speak a few words and understand more than I can say but not enough to carry on an intelligent conversation with any of the people here.

Well I must close for this time hoping to hear from you soon, and I will try to write more next time.

Yours as ever,
George H. ANNA

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 18, 1918;

In active service,

Dear Wife and all,

I will write you a few lines tonight as we just landed in a rest camp for a few days. Got here today but have been in England and it sure is one fine place. No one could have told me it was so pretty. I am feeling fine only little tired today. Was on the water ten days and sea sick four days. This is lots better or prettier than the U.S.A. I don't mean it is better for there is no place like the U.S.A. we all know. Believe me, they sure are glad to see U.S. soldiers come to this country. It has cost me half my money to learn he change.

We have some German prisoners in this camp working them. I am in an American Y.M.C.A. and it sure is full of them. Well the people here don't think the war will last much longer and I don't think so either. Well Father, I wish you was over here with me but it won't be long til I am with you, and it will take me a year to tell you all the news as I can't tell you all by mail. I am going to write to papa tonight to tell all hello. Write as often as you can as I can't write very often as we move again soon.

Frank McGEE

Bat. A 21st F Art., A.E.F.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 25, 1918;

Camp Laurel, Md.; July 2nd, 1918

July 2nd 1918

Dear Editor,

As requested, I will write and tell you and perchance some of my friends about my experiences in the arm.

I arrived in Jefferson Barracks Thursday morning early on May 29th. I reported and was standing around waiting to be assigned to my tent when up walked Harry NEIL and I sure was glad to see him.

On Friday morning we took the examination together, we were seven hours going through the examination. All kinds of contrivances were used to find our physical disabilities but we both passed successfully. We were separated after examination as he was in the quartermaster corp and I in the engineers. We did everything at the barracks from showing more rookies through the examining room to picking up scrap of paper.

A couple of days later Harry and I were going to the Y.M.C.A. when we ran across Mack LOWE and we gave him a royal welcome you can bet for seeing a friend from your home town in the army is better than seeing a dozen on the town streets.

There were thousands of drafted and enlisted men coming in there every day and soon it became so crowded that many slept out in the open thus being initiated directly into real army life.

We got plenty to eat as they had two immense halls holding about three or four thousand each. As I returning from ‘chow’ one noon I met Ted MILLER who had enlisted in the infantry. From then on we were attending every formation to listen for names when they called the shipping list.

Many names we were disappointed by at last of the 7th of June, Harry and I were both called both leaving the same day, he for Jacksonville and I for Camp Laurel.

I was two nights and one day coming, stopping for 3 hours in Cincinnati and 3 hours at Washington during which time I was shown all through the capitol building and saw from a distance the exterior of the White House.

I crossed the Cumberland mountains the second night so missed seeing them but I know the train was merely creeping up them and the air was very chilly.

Camp Laurel is situated just half way between Washington D.C. and Baltimore, Laurel being a town of about 2000 inhabitants. The camp is situated on the state fair grounds and we hope to have some celebration on the 4th and I guess there will also be a good one at Kinmundy. I wish I might be there for the occasion.

I like army life fine and everyone of us are raring to go over but don’t know of course when we will get started. We drill 4 or 5 hours every day and some times take a five mile hike and back in the morning then drill in the afternoon and if you are feeling about half sick from one of your shots in the arm it isn’t so funny by night. I have been working in the orderly tent as clerk for the last few days and I like it fine. I have ten young tentmates all young fellows and we certainly have some time, we have to get up at 5:40 a.m., and must have lights out and keep quite from 10 p.m. on. It is hot here in the daytime and cold at night.

I would like to hear from my friends in Kinmundy and will try to find time to answer all letters.

Yours till the stars and stripes float over Berlin.

Ray E. HAMILTON

Co. C 57th Engineers; Camp Laurel, Md.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 25, 1918;

Mrs. Mattie DOWNS,
Kinmundy, Ill.

Dear Mother,

Long before this, you have received the sad news of the death of your brave and loyal son, Joseph, who died at the hospital from gas received the morning of May 27th. Mother, you are to be proud as your son died as all good soldiers should – with his face to the enemy even after being seriously gassed did he falter. We buried him in the little cemetery on the hill beside his comrades where he sleeps tonight as the little stream below flows on toward the sea.

If there is anything I can do, you only have to write me. All his personal things will be sent you by the government war officials.

Assuring you of our deepest sympathy in your loss. I am, sincerely yours,
Winfred E. ROBB; Chaplain 168th Inf.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – July 25, 1918;

Dear Mother,

Your more than welcome letter was received today. Will write you a few lines to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same. I have a job that is bullet proof so don't worry about me. Having a great old time here. A very beautiful country. How are all the girls and everybody? I made the allotment out to you personally at the old address. Hope you receive the same o.k. Write me as soon as you get this as I am very glad to get any letters that many contain news.

Your loving son,
Dan PROUDFOOT
A.D.M. Co. G., A.E.F. France

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Aug. 8, 1918;

“My Own Home Town”

Written by “Ted” LOWE in France, and Received by “Express” Monday

There are many reasons, I cannot tell you all the reasons why
I love and hope to reach a town by the Illinois Central and maybe C. & E.I.
When I went to school at North Fork the teacher used to teach
About a city, town four north and range three east.
Illinois was the state, county of Marion, and Kinmundy was the name.
It does sound sort of queer but it is a fine town just the same.
I may go East or West or North or South or travel the whole world round,
But what I want most all to see is my parents and my old home town.

If peace should be declared tomorrow
The first picture that would come to me
Is a train coming into a station and a boy with a heart full of glee.
The days of real sport could not be compared with coming home on 23.
The picture comes quite clearly to me
Of the many good smiling faces that I'd be permitted to see.
First my footsteps would be lead
Pass the druggist store Mr. Nirider, Fred
For cards and papers I need not pant
As I can get one and all from Frank Conant.
Next comes the places to feed the troops
Ice cream and candies and Buswell's good soups.
The Liberty Bond I next must thank
Which were bought and sold by the F and M bank.
I must also go to the bank across the street
For Mr. McBride I'm always glad to meet.
Also the jeweler next door to the west
And greet Mr. Nelson whose goods will stand test.
I turn to the north and pass Songers & Brown.
I'm always at ease in my old home town.
So back across the street I dodge
To see Mr. Allen of Masonic Lodge.
His B & L. office happens to be closed
I may need a suit and Mr. C.B. knows;
So back I go as spry as cats,
Charley knows clothes and shoes and hats.
I meet Dr. Laswell and his hand I shake
For thanks to him my teeth never ache.
And across the street Jackson has good steak,
And right next door I can find Mr. Bargh,
Who has tooth paste and brushes large or small,
Also tonic for the hair,
And Garner the barbers are still there.

Kinmundy is one town that I happen to know

Has very good restaurants and a picture show.
(Of course you'll excuse me) for not telling why or how,
I stop so long with W.W. Lowe.
He has good goods _____.
He and his wife write the most and best letters,
So I happen to know them very much better.
When I speak of close friends you'll follow me closer
Then I speak of his ad, Killie the Grocer.
The sight of good furniture makes me feel
That I'd like to sit and chat with Mr. Bill Neil,
But must stop in for a look at Witwer's place,
Hoping Beekie will be there with his bright smiling face.
When I pass the steps of K. of P. hall,
I hope soon to meet friends there one and all.
And crossing a channel on an old cattle boat,
Did not cause me to forget my friend barber Oat.

If I could put all this picture in one frame
I'd go to J.H. Nelms to buy the same.
Please do not forget that the Post Master gets credit
For the letters he sends and the paper he used to edit.
If I could stop into the home of the Express,
I'd be slow about changing my visiting address.
If the guns would only stop firing and bombs cease to come down,
How I could enjoy being back in My Own Home Town.

I could find all the churches, livery barns and garage,
And not be nervous by a big Hun bariage.
Swinging propellers and starting off war planes may sound very tame,
But we are still in the war and its unpleasant just the same.
To go camping for a week is all very well,
But when it lasts so long Sherman knew it was _____(not nice).
It's great to see the fast planes go up, but much nicer to see them come safely down.
Its very pretty here in France but
I'd much rather be in My Own Hometown.

If all the business men wish to be wish
I think they should use the Express and advertise.
They may think they are taking a long chance.
But the paper's widely known and read in France.
It will not be long till the war will be done.
And that will end the work of the Hun,
Using the expression of Ottenstein,
Well smack 'em down as thin as a dime
And as soon as w'ere thru this smacking down,
I'll hurry right back to my Own Home Town.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Aug. 8, 1918

“News of the Boys”

A letter received by Mr. and Mrs. W.J. SPENCER from their son, Hugh, states that he is now stationed somewhere in Belgium.

Friends of Howard CHENNERY have received official cards telling of his safe arrival overseas. He will be remembered as one of the former high school teachers here.

A letter received by his mother from Thos. NEAVILLE, who recently went with a contingent to Camp Shelby, Miss., states that he has received his oversea equipment and will sail soon.

News from France states that Charles HAMMERS, who was recently reported severely wounded, had completely lost his eyesight for a time, but it is now slowly returning. His many friends will be glad to know that he is on the road to recovery.

Word received from Hubert M. FISHER from “over there” says tell everybody hello and that he was enjoying the best of health. He tells of frequent visits with Harry RICHARDSON, son of Rev. W.D. RICHARDSON, former pastor of the M.E. Church of this city.

A recent letter received from “Ted” LOWE tells of enjoying the sights and the work as well. He says he is feeling well and in high spirits. This is typical of the letter from those who are “over there” and explains the futile attempts of the Hun to stem the advance of the “Yanks”.

It will be remembered that some two months ago word reaching here stated Xon SIMER had been severely wounded in France. A recent letter from him states that his wound was of such a nature that he could not be returned to the trenches but was transferred to the Quartermasters Corps in France.

Lloyd NEIL, who until recently was stationed at Camp Taylor, Ky., has just been transferred from Camp Sherman, Ohio, to Camp Hancock, Ga., where he is attending a training school for machine gun officers. A letter from his brother Harry, who recently enlisted in the Quartermaster department and was sent to Camp Johnson, Fla., says that he has received his overseas equipment and expects to sail soon.

Return to Kinmundy: Mr. and Mrs. Otto REESE have moved their household goods from Vernon to this city and they expect to make their home with Mrs. R’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ayers CONANT, until Mr. REESE is called to the colors, which will be sometime before the 15th. Mr. REESE has for the past two years been employed as manager of the Hall Lumber Co. at Vernon, which position he resigned to prepare to enter the service.

Off to Camp Thomas: William “Bill” NEAVILLE, who has been employed in Detroit until the past few months, has received his call and departed Tuesday afternoon for Salem whence he will depart for Camp Thomas, Ky. Bill has been wanting a chance at the Kaiser for some time and we rejoice with him at this opportunity.

“Marion County Express”, Kinmundy, Ill. – Aug. 15, 1918;

July 8, 1918

My Dear Parents,

I will now take the greatest of pleasure in writing you a few lines. I received your letter all Ok. Was delighted very much to hear from you. I always anxiously await for a letter from home, it sure cheers me up to a great extent. I guess you can imagine. Well how does this find you by this long time? I am well and alright at the present time. Was glad to hear that you were all well at the time you wrote. What does this find you all working at? I am still working at my same position. I sure do enjoy firing since I got use to it, tho it isn't so very easy work. I will admit that it has got me down a few times tho that was only when we were on a rough sea; my ship sure does the can can when we are sailing on a rough sea. I have had a few sieges of sea sickness tho I am almost use to it now. I am getting so I can be like the rest of the fellows. I can call my self a regular sea going sailor now. It sure is great to be a sailor and to live a sailors life; this sure is a great navy. I can't say I don't like it at times. I am well satisfied tho the majority of the time. I would rather be working on the farm, there is nothing like the good old farm life. I have already realized that since I came in the navy, Uncle Sam treats us pretty good tho I think he expects too much work out of us. Anyway at times when it comes working nite and day at any old hour or Sunday that is what I am not use to doing tho I have to get use to it in here. However I am not use to it yet. I like to attend church services on Sundays tho there is very few times I get to. I go whenever our ship is in on Sundays. I sure would like to see you all once more tho I can't tell when the time will come. It can't come to quick to suit me. It is pretty lonesome over here at times especially when I have the blues; that misfortune befalls me once a week pretty regular. When ever that occurs I have to write a letter home; then I feel better for a while. I just wish you knew what us boys have to go thru with, don't guess you have any idea how it is with us and it is absolutely impossible for me to tell you as orders are so strict about writing letters they are hard to obey, tho we are compelled to obey all of the orders that is put out; there are many of them to, believe me. I will have a lot to tell you when I get thru this war and can come home. I seen in the Marion County Express where most all the boys I knew have been drafted. Some of them are in France. I am glad they got over safe. We will all know how to fight after the war is over. I know I am sure having lots of experience in warfare since I have been in the war zone. I have been here eight months now; that seems like a long time to me. I hope it will not be that long till the war ends. Well I guess you are working hard now anyway this time of year. I suppose the weather is rather warm there now. I am rather surprised with the climate here; it is nice and cool here all the time. I sleep under two blankets every nite most. I just wish you could see this place; there are lots of sights and curiosities for a fellow to see here – everything is old fashioned. I sure had a time learning to county the English money tho now I know alright. I have been receiving the Express regular for some time now. It is like getting a letter from home. It sure is a treat for me when I can read the good news from home. As news is scarce, I will close hoping this will find you all well as this leaves me alright.

I am Your Loving Son,

Bert McHATTON
U.S.S. Dale – Fireman

“The Kinmundy Express” - Dec. 19, 1918

HONOR ROLL:

Joe DOWNS, Hobart SEE, L. Hugh SPENCER, Omer READNOUR

MARINES:

Dr. Clyde B. CAMERER, Lieut. Com.; John EAGAN, Milton HALL, Rudolph KAGY, Berthel McHATTON, Jesse JONES, Ben CRAIG, Wm. WALKER

IN FRANCE:

Captain Ora WAINSCOTT, Lieut. Eugene PRUETT, Luzon JOHNSON, Zon E. SIMER, George MOTCH, Charles HAMMERS, Charles WOODS, Edward LOWE, Ben SMITH, Lieut. Samuel STOKELY, Carol E. PYLES, Corp. Glenn A. PARKER, Byron E. STOKLEY, Dan'l PROUDFOOT, Avery BOUGHNERS, Corp. Abe BAYLIS, Alva BAYLIS, Bryan ROBB, Corp. Charles HOYT, Bugler Eugene CRAIG, William LEMAY, Herman ANNA, Corp. Leon HANNA, Hubert FISHER, Milburn JONES, Cecil BOUSEMAN, Frank McGEE, S.A. FELLERS, John HENSLEY, Oswald MILLER, Forrest MOTCH, Bernie BAILEY, Clyde FOSTER, Leonard WILSON, Lieut. George BARGH, Corp. Gordon LOWE, Harry NEIL, Fray HAMILTON, Frank DOOLEN, William GREEN, Corp. Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Forrest SEE John FRENCH, Walter MILLER, Earl WILKE, Edgar PARRILL, Raymond SALTNER, Ben BUTTS, Francis Marion FARRIS, F.E. HANKINS, Clarence BARBEE, James LYONS, James Harvey BROWN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Oscar COX, Samuel Eli ROBB, John BARBEE, Earnest HARRIS, Seymour CHANCE, Walter BAYLIS, Edwin WALKER, Thomas MANGNER, George MILLER, John BRASEL Otis G. HINES, Wallace HULTS, Edgar SPIESE, Fred HAMMERS, Cecil PLUE, Thomas D. NEAVILL.

In Training Camps:

Sarg. Charles M. HARVEY, Corp. Forest M. HARVEY, Dewey M. MAXWELL, Clark KLINE, Corp. Glenn BOUGHNERS, Gus SPITZE - honorably discharged, Fay LOVELL, Corp. Ray HARGRAVES, Ray WHITE, Pleasant ROBNETT, Ted MILLER, Bryan DOOLEN, Clay SIMER, John MAHAN, Lewis J. CONANT, Arno MILLER, Ralston HANNA, Lorentz WORMLEY

Drafted Men in Training Camps:

Lieut. William L. NEIL, Sarg. J. Raymond MAHAN, Frank KOLB, Ralph CROSSET, Rudolph SALTNER, Chas. SUKOW - hon. discharged, Corp. Loren KLINE, Monte BRAY, Orville E. GARRETT - hon. discharged, Orien BUTTS, C.L. PERRY, Warren SMITH, Harry WILKE, Murray JONES - hon. discharged, John H. WILSON, Paul ROSWELL, Earl ARNOLD, Fred HUBER, Eugene REINHART, Earl COURSON, William B. HAMMER - hon. dis., Ira D. COMBS - hon. dis., Ellis DUNN, Wm. MEYER, William HARRIS, Robert GREEN, Loyd PRATER, Hugh COUGHLIN, Willis F. PYLES, Myron C. ROSS, Clifford JACKSON, Clifford DOWNS, Wm. Henry GEIGER, Reuben C____, Charlie CONANT, Lutie HULTS, Seth DEVORE, William NEAVILL, George E. ZIMMER, Charles CRANK, Charles KAGY, Ray KING, Fred COURSON, Ira KRUTSINGER, Ezra FELLER, Henry METZGER, Bryan HOWELL, Frank HOWELL, Otto REESE, Arthur STOCK, Harrison HUBERT, Geo. B. HEEG

“The Kinmundy Express” - Dec. 19, 1918 & Dec. 26, 1918

Dear Folks,

I landed in France all right. I was sick about half the time. The sea was smooth, so the sailors said, but it seemed rough to me. I enjoyed the trip fine while I was feeling well. Everything looks so odd here. The people dress so differently and wear wooden shoes. All the French wagons are one horse wagons or carts. They all have shafts. The railroad cars have wheels with spokes like mowing machine wheels and the engines are smaller than any I ever saw in America. I have already seen some German prisoners. I was not very close to them but they seemed to be well dressed and to get as good care as our own soldiers. All the houses are made of stone in France and all the land is cleared up and put in cultivation. We are not with our company yet but I think we will get with them yet. Don't expect a letter from me more than once a week for I don't expect I can write any oftener. I will be glad when I get up with my company so I can get some mail as I feel sure I have some. We have been touring Frances in a box car. We rode in a French car the first trip and in a U.S. car and it liked to have jolted the life out of us. The French cars ride easier than the American cars. The track is just a new one and is rough. Our captain was taken away from us and we are all alone now. The Captain said, he thought we would get back together again. We got news from the front better than I thought. We get a paper from Paris, “The New York Herald”. They look pretty good, the latest they have all quit, but Germany and if they get these men that are in camp into active service, her time will surely be short if I could find a kodak I could take some fine pictures of these odd buildings. I just stepped outside and run across a boy from Kinmundy. I did not know him but BAILEY is his name. They just came in this evening and while they were lined up for mess I called for Ill. boys. There was lots of them but he is the only one I knew anything about. I ate my first blackberries and picked them of the bush since I have been here. The garden stuff here is just at its best now from the looks of things. They have all kinds of German prisoners in this country and they all seem contented.

Nov. 15: Will write some more. I am well and feeling fine. I am with my company now but I have not received any mail, none of the boys have had any mail since they left the U.S. We are close to the front. Some of our boys were on the line when they stopped fighting. My bunch had just started for the front when the firing stopped. SPITLER is on the front. TOTTS did not come over as I did but he is in Frances now. He said, “They had a little accident close to the coast of England. They ran into an English Uboat chaser and smashed it up.” TOTTS is looking well and has one of the finest mustaches you ever saw. If we had some furniture on it would seem a little liek home here. The building we are in is over 1200 years old and is a pretty good old place yet. The boys said Old Fritz came over twice in a aeroplane since they have been here but was soon driven back before he did any damage. This town was in the hands of the Germans at one time not very long ago and is shot up in places pretty bad. They said The ___ was something awful back here at night and they whole sky was lit up. I would liked to have been here when the armistice was signed for I guess the firing was something great the night before they quit.

Nov. 16: I got two letters yesterday, and one today, one from Eff___ was written the 17th of Oct. And the one from home was wirtten the 15th. The one I got today was wirtten the 8th. It is hard to get writing material here only as we buy it. I am awfull glad the war is over but I would like to have been there when it stopped, but I guess I am just as well off and may be better off. Some more fellows and myself are going to the trenches in the morning if it is a pretty day and see if we can't get something for a souvenir. I would like to get a German helmet or something. I don't expect we will go up to the front line trenches for that would be to far. Some of the boys brought in a cow and a goat they had captured. They found them in a cave where Germans had left them when they retreated. It is a nice Holstein cow and a big fat goat. There are some of the boys going into Germany a fewdays and we may go too. I rather think that will be a nice trip. I have been down under this building today, in some of the caves that were made a long time ago. We went into nearly every place we could find; we saw where they put their prisoners in a

real dark palce, and the place where they hung the bodies of people and burned them when they do. This is what an old Frenchman told us that could speak English. We found an underground passage and we are about as far as two city blocks part of the time on our hands and knees and part of the time we could walk. We finally decided to give it up. I might have come out on the other side of town or in the Mense River.

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Pvt. Otis HINES

Co. F. Water Tank Train; Am. E.F. Via N.Y.

"The Marion County Express"; Kinmundy, Illinois
Dec. 19, 1918

The list of names following represents the boys from Kinmundy who have answered the call for service from their government. Readers who know of any others not listed or learn of their arrival in France of any of these will please notify the Express, that they may be properly classified.

VOLUNTEERS

HONOR ROLL:

Joe DOWNS, Hobart SEE, L. Hugh SPENCER, Omer READNOUR

MARINES:

Dr. Clyde B. CAMERER, Lieut. Com.; John EAGAN, Milton HALL, Rudolph KAGY, Berthel McHATTON, Jesse JONES, Ben CRAIG, Wm. WALKER

IN FRANCE:

Captain Ora WAINSCOTT, Lieut. Eugene PRUETT, Luzon JOHNSON, Zon E. SIMER, George MOTCH, Charles HAMMERS, Charles WOODS, Edward LOWE, Ben SMITH, Lieut. Samuel STOKELY, Carol E. PYLES, Corp. Glenn A. PARKER, Byron E. STOKLEY, Dan'l PROUDFOOT, Avery BOUGHNERS, Corp. Abe BAYLIS, Alva BAYLIS, Bryan ROBB, Corp. Charles HOYT, Bugler Eugene CRAIG, William LEMAY, Herman ANNA, Corp. Leon HANNA, Hubert FISHER, Milburn JONES, Cecil BOUSEMAN, Frank McGEE, S.A. FELLERS, John HENSLEY, Oswald MILLER, Forrest MOTCH, Bernie BAILEY, Clyde FOSTER, Leonard WILSON, Lieut. George BARGH, Corp. Gordon LOWE, Harry NEIL, Ray HAMILTON, Frank DOOLEN, William GREEN, Corp. Chester KLINE, Samuel E. LOWE, Forrest SEE, John FRENCH, Walter MILLER, Earl WILKE, Edgar PARRILL, Raymond SALTNER, Ben BUTTS, Francis Marion FARRIS, F.E. HANKINS, Clarence BARBEE, James LYONS, James Harvey BROWN, Ener ZIMMER, J. Oscar COX, Samuel Eli ROBB, John BARBEE, Earnest HARRIS, Seymour CHANCE, Walter BAYLIS, Edwin WALKER, Thomas MANGNER, George MILLER, John BRASEL Otis G. HINES, Wallace HULTS, Edgar SPIESE, Fred HAMMERS, Cecil PLUE, Thomas D. NEAVILL.

In Training Camps:

Sarg. Charles M. HARVEY, Corp. Forest M. HARVEY, Dewey M. MAXWELL, Clark KLINE, Corp. Glenn BOUGHNERS, Gus SPITZE - honorably discharged, Fay LOVELL, Corp. Ray HARGRAVES, Ray WHITE, Pleasant ROBNETT, Ted MILLER, Bryan DOOLEN, Clay SIMER, John MAHAN, Lewis J. CONANT, Arno MILLER, Ralston HANNA, Lorentz WORMLEY

Drafted Men in Training Camps:

Lieut. William L. NEIL, Sarg. J. Raymond MAHAN, Frank KOLB, Ralph CROSSET, Rudolph SALTNER, Chas. SUKOW - hon. discharged, Corp. Loren KLINE, Monte BRAY, Orville E. GARRETT - hon. discharged, Orien BUTTS, C.L. PERRY, Warren SMITH, Harry WILKE, Murray JONES - hon. discharged, John H. WILSON, Paul ROSWELL, Earl ARNOLD, Fred HUBER, Eugene REINHART, Earl COURSON, William B. HAMMER - hon. dis., Ira D. COMBS - hon. dis., Ellis DUNN, Wm. MEYER, William HARRIS, Robert GREEN, Loyd PRATER, Hugh COUGHLIN, Willis F. PYLES, Myron C. ROSS, Clifford JACKSON, Clifford DOWNS, Wm. Henry GEIGER, Reuben C____, Charlie CONANT, Lutie HULTS, Seth DEVORE, William NEAVILL, George E. ZIMMER, Charles CRANK, Charles KAGY, Ray KING, Fred COURSON, Ira KRUTSINGER, Ezra FELLER, Henry METZGER, Bryan HOWELL, Frank HOWELL, Otto REESE, Arthur STOCK, Harrison HUBERT, Geo. B. HEEG

"The Marion County Express"; Kinmundy, Illinois; Dec. 19, 1918

Dear Folks;

I landed in France all right. I was sick about half the time. The sea was smooth, so the sailors said, but it seemed rough to me. I enjoyed the trip fine while I was feeling well.

Everything looks so odd here. The people dress so differently and wear wooden shoes. All the French wagons are one horse wagons or carts. They all have shafts. The railroad cars have wheels with spokes like mowing machine wheels and the engines are smaller than any I ever saw in America.

I have already seen some German prisoners. I was not very close to them but they seemed to be well dressed and to get as good care as our own soldiers. All the houses are made of stone in France and all the land is cleared up and put in cultivation. We are not with our company yet but I think we will get with them yet. Don't expect a letter from me more than once a week for I don't expect I can write any oftener. I will be glad when I get up with my company so I can get some mail as I feel sure I have some. We have been touring Frances in a box car. We rode in a French car the first trip and in a U.S. car and it liked to have jolted the life out of us. The French cars ride easier than the American cars. The track is just a new one and is rough. Our captain was taken away from us and we are all alone now. The Captain said, he thought we would get back together again. We got news from the front better than I thought. We get a paper from Paris, "The New York Herald". They look pretty good, the latest they have all quit but Germany and if they get these men that are in camp into active service, her time will surely be short. If I could find a kodak I could take some fine pictures of these odd buildings. I just stepped outside and run across a boy from Kinmundy. I did not know him but BAILEY is his name. They just came in this evening and while they were lined up for mess I called for Ill. boys. There was lots of them but he is the only one I knew anything about. I ate my first blackberries and picked them of the bush since I have been here. The garden stuff here is just at its best now from the looks of things. They have all kinds of German prisoners in this country and they all seem contented (to be continued)

Dec. 26, 1918:

(continued from last week)

Nov. 15: Will write some more. I am well and feeling fine. I am with my company now but I have not received any mail, none of the boys have had any mail since they left the U.S. We are close to the front. Some of our boys were on the line when they stopped fighting. My bunch had just started for the front when the firing stopped. SPITLER is on the front. TOTTS did not come over as I did but he is in France now. He said, "They had a little accident close to the coast of England. They ran into an English Uboat chaser and smashed it up." TOTTS is looking well and has one of the finest mustaches you ever saw. If we had some furniture on it would seem a little like home here. The building we are in is over 1200 years old and is a pretty good old place yet. The boys said "Old Fritz" came over twice in a aeroplane since they have been here but was soon driven back before he did any damage. This town was in the hands of the Germans at one time not very long ago and is shot up in places pretty bad. They said the noise was something awful back here at night and they whole sky was lit up. I would liked to have been here when the armistice was signed for I guess the firing was something great the night before they quit.

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"The Marion County Express"; Kinmundy, Illinois; Jan. 2, 1919

Chas. KAGY, son of Mrs. Idella KAGY of Meacham twp., arrived home last Friday night from Camp Grant, having been honorably discharged from the service. He had received his overseas equipment when the armistice was signed.

Lewis CONANT, who is stationed at an ensign's school at Cleveland, Ohio, is spending a short furlough with relatives and friends, of this city. He still has a few months to serve before receiving his commission in the Navy and will then no doubt be placed in the Merchant Marine Service.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 9, 1919

St. Nazaire, France – Dec. 20, 1918:

Dear Friend Gus,

I have been intending to write you a letter ever since I landed in France, but have never found time until now. I received two papers from home the other day and was sure glad to get them for I was wondering how the old town of Kinmundy was coming along with so many of us in the service.

France is a very beautiful country but give me the good old States every time. I have seen some very beautiful buildings since I have been over here. I was in the Cathedral here in St. Nazaire and it was the most beautiful structure I have ever seen.

Well, Gus, I have a position that sure keeps me on the jump. I am chief clerk for the Lieutenant in charge of the final statement writers in the Effects Depot and I sure have all I want to do. You may not know what this Effects Depot is. Well, we handle all of the service records of the boys who have been killed or died. I do all the correspondence work and sure have a plenty.

I have only me, one fellow from home since I have been across I was over at the Y one night and run across Harvey Brown and we sure were two happy soldiers. There is not a night but what we see each other, for we are both stationed here in St. Nazaire and by putting our mail together we know just about everything that is going on back home.

I will try and tell you something about this town of St. Nazaire. It has a population of about twenty-five thousand French people and does not cover any more territory than Kinmundy. One can go into eight different stores and not walk over fifty feet. But when you get into one of these stores they are not so small but what you pay dear for what you get.

One evening my chum and I decided we would eat supper uptown and what we ate would cost us about 30 cents back home but over here it cost us 30 francs for both of us, which is equal to about \$6 in American money, so you can imagine how far a soldier's pay goes. This town is situated on the water front and has a very beautiful boulevard.

The streets are all paved but have no street cars. I have only seen one car since I have been in France and that was in Brest and it wasn't as big as a Ford.

St. Nazaire has a very beautiful Public Park and we have a concert out there every Sunday it does not rain, but it has rained for three weeks and I am hoping it will be nice Sunday so I can go and hear it. We have a nice Y.M.C.A. which is on the boulevard. We have a show three times a week and I have been running the machine one in a while and it sure seems like old times to get inside of a booth again.

Well Gus, I guess I have told you all I know so will have to close. Give my best to all my friends and tell them I will see them soon.

As ever your friend,

1st Pvt. Harry S. NEAL;

Supply Co. 32; Q.M.C.; U.S.A.P. O. No. 701; Am E E

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 9, 1919

“Somewhere in France” – Nov. 23, 1918

Dear Mother,

I do not know how long it has been since I have written to you. I received a letter from Marshall a few days ago.

Well, mother dear, you can't imagine how busy we were at the front during the last 60 days before the war ended. You see mother, we are just like a good laborer in the states; we made a good reputation for ourselves and we can always find a place to start something and we have been successful in everything so far.

But I suppose the National Army get all the praise as they did in the home paper I was reading today. But if an investigation were made, it would be found that two families spoken of did not even have one son at the front during the fighting, but mother, you folks were lucky enough to have two sons at the front during the most bloody and terrible battles and were at the front when the guns ceased firing. If you knew what division we belonged to, you would read every day what we were doing for the paper has something about us every day.

And another thing you have to be proud of mother, is that we were not dragged into going but considered it a necessity and as soon as we were both old enough we went and could have stayed out of it entirely if we had wanted to. We had made out plans to go long before we left but it was so hard to say “good bye” to the home we loved so well. I am not sorry I enlisted. I have been away from you for a long time and I think of you often.

I have been promoted from a 1st Class Private to a Corporal and am in charge of a corporal wagon and Charles and Gregory are my drivers.

Love to All,

Corp. Burdette E. McCARTY; Batt. O. 21 F Art., A.E.F. France

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 9, 1919

Somewhere in France – Dec. 1, 1918

Dear Folks,

It has been some time since I have written you, but I have scarcely had time to write or do anything else but work. I have been pretty busy night and day but we are getting things pretty well cleaned up now. Today is the first Sunday I have had off in France. I am willing to put in double working if it will only help to get us home sooner. There was some talk of getting us home by Christmas but we will be in luck if we get to go that soon, considering the time we have been over here.

They have put our company in the First Army and if they do not change it, we can expect to be on our way before many more weeks.

I have not had any letters from any of you except Hazel. There were a few letters forwarded from the states but none direct. I wrote Bernie but did not hear from him. I hope he did not get in that last drive. If I only knew what division he was in, I would know about where he is. I know he was in Co. A, 54 Infantry, but he never said what division. Some of the boys of my Company have ran across relatives and friends but I have never seen a familiar face among the thousands of soldiers I've seen. We spent some Thanksgiving over here. It rained all day long. We celebrated by working.

I was glad to get off today as it gave me a change to get out and explore some of the country. My pal and I took about a fifteen mile hike. This part of the country is not so pretty as where we were before. They are still censoring our mail so we can't write what we want to, but I don't think it will be long until I can tell it all personally. I guess Hazel expected I would come home as soon as she heard the war was over. I hope she does not have to wait much longer. It sure has seemed a long time to me but it has been an experience worth the time. I must close now hoping to see you all soon.

Your son,
Bert BAILEY

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 9, 1919

Nov. 28, 1918

Dear Folks,

I will now try and write a few lines as today is Thanksgiving and a little bit chilly, but Private BAILEY is fine and dandy. I have not received any mail for nearly two months. I left my Co. the first of Nov. and went to the hospital. I had that disease you call Spanish Influenza. I was well by the time they got me to the hospital. I was there about a week and have been all the rest of the time getting back to my Co. and I am not back yet and might not get back but I hope I will for I know I have lots of mail there. I don't know when we will get back to the States, but I hope we get there before long. I was on the Verdun front when I left the Co. I am close to Bordeaux, that is a large city in France. I was in the hospital when the Armistice was signed; the boys liked to tore down that place. We made the Huns say enough and I was one of the guys and I am still one of the guys. I wish all the boys could say that but of course there never was a war but what there was some one killed. We are waiting for them to say “Gang Plank Formation” which means All aboard for U.S.A. and when we see that Statue of Liberty in N.Y. we will be a happy bunch. We sure have some frost here. We slept on the ground for a few nights. We would wake up in the moe frost all over our blankets and sometimes our heads would stick out and catch a little of it. Don't write to me any more for I won't get your mail.

With Love,
Bernie BAILEY

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 16, 1919

Private Edward AUMILLER of Co. E, 320th Inf. American E.F. writes the following letter from France:

Dear Friend: I will try once more to write you a few lines. I am all ok. Hope these few lines will and you the same. I am in France yet still drilling quails right and left. We are practicing for Parade Work over here and I expect in the U.S.A. But I don't know when it will be. I don't know where Ernest Black of Odin is. I haven't heard from him since our division was divided up. I haven't heard from any of the boys since then I would like to know where they are. I was up at the lines once since I have been here. I never got hurt at all it wasn't as safe a time as I have seen and I never saw the worst of it. Telf, the other girls I haven't time to write to them. Will write soon. I haven't been where I could write or I would have written before. Don't think I have forgotten you or didn't want to write it was because I was where I couldn't write. I haven't received any letters from anyone since October. Sometimes I think my friends have lost me and don't know where I am. I must close with Best Wishes for a Merry Xmas and A Happy New Year.

Private AUMILLER was in training at Camp Taylor later Camp Sherman and then Camp Mills. At this time he was a member of Co. I 335 Infantry 84th Division but has been transferred to the Co. given above.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 16, 1919

France, Dec. 20, 1918

Dear Dad,

We arrived at Aix Le Bains this evening and so far have found it to be a swell place. It is located east of Lyons if you want to locate it on the map. We left Pont Mousson Wednesday morning and went over to Nancy where we staid until yesterday evening. Got a good bath and what clean clothes needed there. One of the finest bath rooms and pool I have ever seen. Sure was swell. The Y.M.C.A. has charge of it. They took us to hotels when we got there. Have a swell soft bed. Don't know how I will be able to sleep in it but it sure looks fine. Most of the entertainment here is furnished by the Y. I think I told you I was going on my seven days leave. Well the seven days didn't start until we arrived here so the time coming and going don't count. That will mean almost two weeks away from the Battery. I thought I was lucky to be among the first fifteen to get to go on leave. Only fifteen can go at a time that is out of each Battery. There sure is some fine natural scenery thru this country. The mountain scenery is great, or at least I think so. Am not sure but think it is part of the Alp mts. Can tell you more about it next time as I haven't been around any yet. Just came over to the Y.M.C.A. Sure have a swell Y. We had a good supper at the hotel. I didn't know what part of it was but it was good just the same. This trip is free. All expenses are paid. Of course, there is plenty one can spend his money for but all necessary expenses are paid. Train fare and hotel bills. How are all the folks? I was about to forget to ask. I am alright and hope every one at home is. Don't know when I will ever get home but we don't want to think of that to soon. Don't expect me until you see me coming because it may be some time before I get there. This is about all I have to say tonight, must go try my bed as I am a little tired after being on the train for about twenty-four hours. These trains aren't so comfortable as ours in the States. We didn't have a birth.

Your son,

Pvt. B.F. DOOLEN

Bat. B. 329 F.A.; American E F.A.P Q 783

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 16, 1919

“Somewhere in France”; Dec. 16

Dear Mrs. Reynolds;

It is with much sorrow that I have today learned of your loss and in this feeble way, extend you my heartfelt sympathy. As you know, I have known Willie since early childhood and his life was such that it should be a beacon light blazing a path straight enough that any of us should be proud to follow it. Your boy was one against whom I have never heard a word spoken.

I have always enjoyed myself in his company and I assure you that I have many times thought and looked forward to the time when this terrible war should cease and we would be able to return home to meet again and spend many more happy hours together. He did his bit and gave his all in defense of his and our flag. It must be a great blow to you and Bertha to give him up, but there is a guide for us all which says, “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Many mothers in America will yearn for boys who have come over here and will never return. Only yesterday, a trainload of boys coming from the front was wrecked in town, killing one and wounding 12 others. The loss in this war to America is great but it is only slight compared with what it is in the countries over here.

The war is over now and the boys are beginning to start home. There will be many happy reunions. The reunion you have been planning can never be, but you must be brave and bear the burden and fight on, for when the burden of life for you is ended and the summons of “Come” is sounded, you can look across to the other shore, and see a bright shining star which Willie has palneted there to lead you home. May these few words of sympathy cheer you on your lonely road.

Pvt. W.I. GREEN; 2ND Co. O R.S.D., A.P.O. 741

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 16, 1919

Jan. 12, 1919

Dear Parents & All,

Will answer your letter received yesterday. Was sure glad to hear from you and to learn that you were all well and that George is alright for the last part of the war was sure fierce.

I only received a flesh wound. A machine gun bullet bit me just above the right hip and went straight across my back, but never hit my back bone. It sure was a lucky shot. I have the bullet and am keeping it for a souvenir. I was glad to hear that Ted and Gene did not have to go across. I was wounded on the Verdun front, about five miles from the Belgium line. What hospital is Frank at? One of the nurses told me that there was a boy here from Kinmundy but she had forgotten his name and she did not know whether he was still here or not. I would think they could hear from Bernie now as the mail goes alright. I have never seen John BRASEL since I got off the boat at Liverpool, England. Well I don't know much to write. Can tell you all the dope better than I can write it, so will close for this time.

Walter A. MILLER

Gen. Hospital, No. 28, Ward 29, Ft. Sheridan, Ill.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 23, 1919

Respect to Comrade: The following letters were received by Mrs. Priscilla REYNOLDS following the death of her son, Willie, with the Expeditionary forces in France and best eloquent testimony to his popularity among his friends and comrades in arms.

Mrs. Priscilla REYNOLDS – Alma, Ill.

Dear Mrs. REYNOLDS: I suppose you were notified by wire of the death of your son, William. However, I am writing in order to be assured that you are notified.

He was taken ill transferred to the hospital and passed from his earth on Oct. 12. He was in the hospital several days. His illness was contagious, so there was nothing I could do to prevent it.

He was loved by all members of the company and was known for his genial spirit. We send our sincerest sympathy to you in your grief. God’s Will be done. His effects will be sent to you by the commanding officer of the hospital.

Sincerely,

H.A. CRAMER

Capt. Co. A. 326 M.G.B.N.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 23, 1919

France, Dec. 14, 1918:

Dear Friend: I expect you have already had official notice of the death in one British Hospital here of your son, 1978544, Bugler W.E. REYNOLDS, 326 Machine Gun. Bat. U.S. Army. He was buried with full military honors in a portion of the French Cemetery set apart for British and American troops and as chaplain of his denomination, I conducted the burial service. I wish to convey to you my very deep sympathy with you in your bereavement. Your son was one the many who have laid down their lives in a great an noble cause and the world is even now beginning to reap the benefit of their sacrifice. May God be with you in your sorrow giving to your hearts the comfort and hope which He alone, can impart. With utmost sympathy, I remain, Yours very sincerely,

Chaplain Alex C. MacLEAN

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois - Jan. 23, 1919

Kinmundy News: Pleasant ROBNETT has been honorably discharged from the service and returned home this morning and will assume charge of the Star Garage.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 6, 1919

“Praises Work of Kinmundy Woman” - Jan. 25, 1919

People of Kinmundy, Illinois:

I returned to the U.S.A. on the U.S. Huron, an old German boat, Frederick the Great, the one that the Kaiser made the trip around the world on in 1907. On our trip home, we had the sad experience of getting into a storm with a 120 mile gale lasting for 24 hours and the constant rolling of the ship was very tiresome and made many sick. During the night when the storm was at its worst the ship rolled 51 degrees. Of course not being real seamen, you may have some idea what we all thought.

We landed at Newport News, Va. Jan. 18, and the Red Cross and the Hospital certainly made us feel at home and at the hospital here, the Red Cross have wonderful community houses for the returned soldiers and while visiting there I had the pleasure of meeting Miss RUTHERFORD of your town and she certainly is a grand lady to be among the boys for she's a regular mother to us all. When she learned I was from the Rainbow Division we had many things to talk about and the first thing she asked me was, “Do you know Joseph DOWNS?” and she was very surprised when I knew him so well. Up until the time that Joe was killed, most of my meals in France were cooked by him and I might say that my Xmas and New Years dinners a year ago were cooked by Joe and if we had been at home it couldn't have been better. Joe certainly was well liked by the boys of his company and had a great many friends through the Regiment for he was always up and doing.

The 42nd (Rainbow Division) was in the trenches for four months straight on the Lorraine front and during our stay there we had several scraps with Fritz and at midnight on May 27, the Germans sent over several hundred large gas shells in the area where our advanced dressing station and kitchens were located and you would not wonder why men die from this gas if you could see how it turned the grass and trees yellow at this place. From this dressing station we sent two hundred and seventy-five to the hospital who were gassed; several died on the road and many others after they arrived and Joe DOWNS was among them. A boy who sacrificed all he had, his life. One of his friends was killed and his captain badly gassed at the same time. Words cannot describe a gas attack or any other kind of battle so I won't attempt it.

We have a Victrolia in our Ward that was bought by the people of Kinmundy and we sure enjoy it. Nothing like that at the front, our only music there was the whizzing and busting of shells. We had two regiment of Artillery 75 M in our Division - one from Minnesota and one from Illinois and when the Doughboys had them behind them in a drive they were satisfied and if they can't make the Huns retreat, no one can.

Sgt. Carl W. ASCHEN; 168th Inf., 42nd Div.; Winterset, Iowa

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 6, 1919

Commercy, France, Nov. 24, 1918

Dear Father,

Well dad, as the censor is lifted I can tell you where I am. Commercy is a small town about thirty miles from Verdun. Will try and describe my trip which won't take very long; nothing much happening. We left Camp Merritt, N.J. about two o'clock in the morning of Oct. 20, marched seven miles to Alsine, landing on the Hudson River, then sailed up to New York when we went aboard our ship. The ship we crossed in was not very large, only carried about one thousand men. It sure did some pitching and tossing. There were fourteen ships in our fleet and they were guarded by war ships all the way across. I was a little sick for three days, would lose every meal about fifteen minutes after eating, but soon became alright. About the fourth night quite a storm came up and a big wave rolled over the deck and knocked the hatch off and let about two feet of water in where we were. I was quite a bit scared too when it was all taking place. It was funny after it was all over. There were hats, shoes, messkits, sacks, and everything floating. We sailed up around Ireland and down through the Irish sea to Liverpool where we landed on the 31st of October. When we came into the Irish sea we were met by a British fleet and taken into port. We went from Liverpool to Camp Codford in England where we rested three days, went from there to South Hampton, where we went aboard a ship to cross the Channel. We were some crowded on that ship. There was such a storm that the ship did not sail that night and the next day we spent seeing South Hampton and sailed that night; they always sail at nite. When almost across, our ship ran into a British trawler, which made a hole in our ship you could walk through. The trawler sank in four minutes after the collision occurred. I was some scared again. Our ship began whistling and soon the air was full of air ships. I was sure glad when we got into port. I was beginning to get tired of the sea by this time. We landed at Harve, Frances, went into camp for two days when we were leaded into box cars and sent to another camp down below Paris. They sure have some cars here and in England. They hold about forty men or eight horses, or about ten tons. We stayed at Chateau Du Loir about one week and was sent here to join our company, and I was sure glad to get back.

Well dad, I have told you about all I have time to so will suit and go to mess. Will tell you all when I come home.

With love,
Tots SPIESE

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 6, 1919

Coblenz, Germany; Jan. 12, 1919

Dear Folks,

Well today is Sunday and a work day for us too, but I managed to slip away and will write a letter. I have had no chance to write the past week as we have been on the road all the time. We have been placed in the Third army and were sent up here to occupy this portion of Germany. We have no idea when we will be home. There is plenty of work here at Coblenz for us for quite a awhile, and unless the Second Army relieves us this spring, we will not get home for some time yet. We have charge of the clothing ware houses for the Third Army. We have been doing this same kind of work in France, and hoped to be sent home when we finished there, but no such luck. I like it fine here though, it is sure a pretty country. We have not had any cold weather so far. We have good quarters and plenty to eat and wear so I suppose if we have plenty of patience they will send us they will send us home in due time. You know it kinda hurts when some of the boys are going home and you can't go. They are giving us a chance to see a little of the world anyway, but they don't forget to mix quite a little work along with it.

Coblenz is quite a large place and is on the Rhine river. We get quite a lot of freedom and have a chance to get out and see some of the city. I guess it will be some time before I get any mail, as a move always means a wait for mail. I left Florery, France, just a week ago today. George MILLER was down to see me as we were getting on the train to leave. I think they will be kept there for some time. I outfitted him with boots, shoes, and a leather coat before I left. His company had not been able to get the many new clothes. I have not heard any more about the 6th Division so I don't know whether Bernie has arrived home yet. I suppose most all the drafted men have returned from the camps by this time. As it is getting close to supper time will have to close. Write often and address me the same as usual. Love to all.

Your son,

Bert Bailey

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 6, 1919

“Somewhere in France”; Dec. 26

Dear Father and all,

Received a letter today dated October 17. You was saying you had not been getting letters from me. Of course I can't write as often as you can but I write when I get an opportunity and of course that is not every day and you might say not every week, but I do my best and of course, you know that is good.

Christmas is over and I guess I was thought of by homefolks, but listen, don't worry about Private BAILEY, for when I do get back we will sit down and have a good chat all about the war. We were treated fine Christmas and had the best of eats, pie, cake roast pork, candy and everything and I am sure capable of doing justice to anything like that. I got a letter from Bert and also Frank, the latter was wounded, but I guess Bert never got to the front.

I wish you all a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year and when you think of me, think that I am in a palace of gold and protected by the best of artillery. I believe I told you not to write when I was in the hospital but now I am with the Co., so keep on writing.

Bernie BAILEY

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 20, 1919

Lendelange, Luxembourg – Jan. 24, 1919

Dear Grandpa and Grandma,

Your letter was a very pleasant surprise to me, I hardly hoped to hear from you so soon and wasn't sure that I would hear at all, as I had written once before and no answer came. I don't suppose that you received my letter. You did not say anything about your health so I presume you are both feeling fine. I certainly hope that you are and that the “flu” passes you by. Isn't it terrible the raid it has made on our country? There is but very little of it in the A.E.F. and I do certainly hope it will not get a start. I am glad that my letter reached you at a time like it did. I didn't say much, but there must have been something of interest to you all in it. I hope your Christmas was as pleasant as your Thanksgiving. My Christmas was very pleasant indeed, considering everything. We had a good dinner and some entertainment given by the soldiers. Of course we couldn't have half the time in France that we would have in the U.S. no matter what we had to eat or what kind of entertainment.

You asked me what we did when we got the news that the armistice was signed. The morning of the cessation of firing is one that I shall never forget; it sort of stupefied all of us. The boys kept up the most terrific bombardment that you ever heard right up to the last minute, and then all was quiet just as sudden as though every gun had fallen into the earth at precisely the same instant. We had become so accustomed to the continual firing and bursting of shells that we missed it dreadfully. Of course, we were glad that it was over but it made us nervous for several days and at night it was not possible to sleep until we got used to it. There were bonfires at night and lights in Thiancourt close to our position – a thing before unheard of. We had our celebration by being quiet and to roaming around over the fields without danger from an unseen source. Don't know who enjoyed it more, you or we. I went right up along the front line trenches about a half mile from our last position, and looked for souvenirs to take back home. I could find nothing much worth the picking up. I have already sent home two German helmets and a German canteen. I have half sack full of other stuff but don't think I can take it all back with me. We stayed near Thiancourt for several days and then moved forward with the army of occupation. We went as far as Luxembug and here we have been ever since. Except for our most unendurable impatience to be going home, we are pretty well satisfied. We are quartered comfortably in the houses of the Luxenburg people and as we get pretty good food to eat. The weather so far has been pretty mild except for the almost incessant rains and a few times it has been cold enough to snow but not for long.

Yesterday I returned from a fifteen day furlough to Aixfes Bains. This is a world famed health and pleasure resort. Before the war it was a great place and frequented by the rich and royalty of the European countries. It was quite a place for American tourists too. It is said that Harry K. Thaw won the Casino one day and lost it the next, an exchange of three million dollars. This little city is very beautiful; it lies between the lake of Bourget and Mount Revard. Just beyond the lake is another high mountain known as the “Cat's tooth”. I went to the top of Mt. Revard on a cog wheel track. It took a long time to get up and it was very cold, but I was not sorry as the view was delightful. Mt. Blanc could be easily seen from where we were and on the other side we looked down upon the Lake of Bourget and the little city of Aix Les Bains where we started. While up there we tried our luck at skiing and coasting down the hill. It was some sport but it was too much like work to stay with it long.

The principle attraction for soldiers in AixLes Bains is the Y.M.C.A. building which used to be the Casino of which I spoke a while ago. It is the most beautiful building that I have ever been in and also a very large one. Every form of entertainment that a man would wish for was furnished by the Y.M.C.A. – tennis, golf, baseball, ping pong, billiards, and indoor games, cards, etc. Then there is all kinds of music and vaudeville and motion pictures. Every other night there was a dance in the Y.M.C.A. All the Y.M.C.A. lady secretaries are good dancers. During our stay there we were quartered at the very best hotels and ate good food. All expenses were paid by the government.

If it is possible to go through Kinmundy or Chicago on my return home I will do my best to make it. I would love so much to see all of your people again. The last time I heard from mama, everyone at home was well. They all had the "flu" but now are completely recovered.

Give my regards to all the rest of the folks and the friends I know there. When you write again tell me if you know of any Kinmundy boys in France and what organization they are in.

Lots of Love,

Gerald B. MEEKS

This interesting letter was received by Mr. and Mrs. D.C. BEAVER and the writer is well known here, having resided here until a few years ago and is the son of W.H. MEEKS of San Antonio, Texas.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 27, 1919

Viaden, Luxemburg – Jan. 21, 1919

Dearest Home Folks;

I haven't heard from you since I last wrote, but I know there must be a letter from you awaiting me at Steinfort. I'll try to drop you a few lines while I'm here to let you know that I am still O.K., am thinking of all of you and am trying to have a good time as usual. I became so useless as a guard or sentinel in Steinfort they decided I needed a change of work and scenery, consequently, I am attending the Division Signal School here learning ALL about radio, line and visual signaling. There are five of six men from each Co. in the Division attending various schools near here, viz: signal, automatic rifle, grenade (three men were severely wounded at grenade school today), bayonet and trench mortar. I can't appreciate the military value and significance of such schools, now that the war is over and we are all anticipating an immediate return to America and civil life.

I consider myself most fortunate in having been sent here, Viaden, being the oldest city in Luxbg., and possessing a number of historic and interesting features, is the mecca of every tourist or sight seer who visits this little country. We reach this city by rail on a narrow gauge track that ascends the mountains by a very circuitous route. Viaden was the refuge of Victor Hugo during his exile here in 1870, 71. There is a monument here dedicated to his memory, also a café that bears his name. I am now less than fifty yards away from the house wherein he dwelt during the year he lived here. He has written a book entitled “De Louis 1 Edil (after the Exile)” in which he tells about Viaden. There is an older, ancient and ruined castle here that was built in the fourth century. A chapel was added to it in the 17th century. It is open to visitors but I haven't had an opportunity to visit it yet. There is a large book of register in the chapel that contains the names of those who have visited the place. Yesterday it received the signatures of Gen. Joffre and Gen. Steinmetz who were sight seeing here. I didn't get to see them as I was in school during their brief visit. It contains the name of King Henry I, Wm of Orange, Victor Hugo, Grand Duchess and her family, Ex Kaiser Wilhelm and his sons other crowned (or once crowned heads) of Europe, artists and poets world renown. There is an ancient church here that was carved from the rock. The four only survivors of the “Black Death” in this town carved the church from the stone as a tribute to God for his deliverance thru that peril. This may be mythical but the church is real and is an evidence of some one's difficult and persistent efforts.

Viaden is situated between pine covered mountains on the banks of the beautiful little river Our, just a fifteen minute walk from the German border. No one can cross the border without a pass, this applies to us as well as the civilians. This town reminds me very much of La Romboute in the Anneignes, in fact this is almost like having another furlough.

When I passed through Division Headquarters in Diekirch yesterday whom should I meet but Byran ROBB. He transferred to Co. A 108th M.P.'s in November and is now liable to remain over here longer than if he had remained in the Infantry. The M.P.'s will probably be kept a little longer than the Inf., but we may all go back at the same time. He is the first Kinmundy boy I have seen since September 8. Well, I'm getting sleepy, so I'll close and take my usual nightly nap. Hoping this finds you all well, I am your loving son and brother,

Leon Hanna

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 27, 1919

January 31, 1919

Dear Folks: As I am doing nothing this afternoon will drop you a few lines to let you know I am well and everything is O.K. with me. How are all of you folks at home. It has been a little colder lately with a light skiff of snow a couple of times but it don't stay on the ground long for the ground doesn't freeze very solid and thaws out every day. We have our tent warm and cozy now with two stoves going. It has two thickness of canvas consequently it holds the heat almost equal to a house. We have a part of it partitioned off for the wood supply. As for getting cold in driving, there is no danger for we have been issued leather jackets and driving mitts.

Dad, these ambulances are G.M.C.'s, put out by the General Motors Company of Pontiac, Mich. They are pretty good motor (confidential motor) at least there has been no trouble with them so far. When they came out of the factory, the governors on the carburetors were set so that the maximum speed was twenty miles and a padlock put on each one, but most of them are turned up so one can get about 30 or 35 miles per hour now.

I got a card from Leon last Sunday, dated January 6, from Luxembourg saying he had written me a letter before that date, but I haven't received it yet. The only chance of our meeting over here is that I may be sent to Germany, but I do not think that will happen. I hope we are not transferred in the army of occupation, but I would like to see Germany while I am over here.

That is too bad about Walter but I hope he recovers soon. I got a letter from Orville, also one from Hank this week. Hank's was dated Nov. 19 and was forwarded from Camp Crane and Camp Merritt, N.J.

Mother, I did not get your Xmas package, at least not so far, but may get it yet as several of the boys haven't received theirs.

Well, after next week we will have the whole camp to ourselves for the other company is going to leave for LeMans sometime next week, as one company can handle the work here now.

Yes Ruby, that postcard is a view of a portion of Montbazon, which is a small town about three miles from Camp Chambray, is about the same size, but is only half as far, so we usually go there in search of amusement, but we never go to the movies there. Well folks, I can't think of anything else that would be of interest to you so will close, hoping all is well with you.

With Love,
Pvt. R.D. HANNA
Evac. Amb. Co. 67, A.P.O. 717

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – Feb. 27, 1919

The following letter was received by Miss Clara SEE in answer to a letter of inquiry concerning her nephew, Herman ANNA, who has at various times been reported dead. While this letter in itself does not throw much light on this question, a previous letter from a nurse in one of the hospitals in France told of his death and burial. Relatives here have virtually giving up hope of ever seeing him again, and thus it seems that we shall be compelled to place another golden star on our service flag, a star changed from the blue by the transforming power of man’s greatest service to mankind, his life for his fellow man.

That Herman ANNA gave an excellent account of himself, is very apparent from the words of his Major in the following letter. Truly, as he has said, his relatives and friends may be proud of him.

Mostroff, Luxemborg, Jan. 24, 1919

Miss Clara SEE – Kinmundy, Ill.

Dear Madam – Your letter of January 3rd, regarding your nephew, Herman ANNA, received and noted. To the best of my knowledge, he was injured on Nov. 10th in the battle of Marchville and taken to the hospital in a serious condition. I have been able to get but one report concerning him and that was that one of the members of his company had seen him in the hospital. However this was very uncertain as it came to me from other parties.

Whether dead or alive, you and his friends and relatives can well be proud of him, as he fought like a demon on the day he was injured. He was attacked by three Germans who concentrated their fire on him. He got two of them, but the third one got him. The boys all say his fighting was wonderful.

I trust by this time you will have received some good news concerning him.

Yours truly,

Albert H. Gravenhorst – Major 130th Infantry

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 13, 1919

France, Jan. 13, 1919

Dear Sister, Brother, Father and Mother,

Just received a letter from you dated Nov. 29 so you see I was a long time in getting it although it was good when it did come. Just think this is the first mail I have had in a month, but don't worry about me for I am fine and dandy.

I was called over to the Orderly room the other day and to my surprise there was a letter to the Company Commander from home, saying you were not receiving any mail from me. I sure wrote so don't put the blame on me. We are billeted in a French town and drill 5 hours a day. We have football games the rest of the day. The weather at the present is very good only we have lots of rain. Frank wrote and told me he wounded, but not so bad. I don't know when we will sail for the U.S.A. but I think before long. When I do get there, we will have a big old time, so just wait patiently and I will land all O.K.

Love to all,
Bernie BAILEY

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 13, 1919
Goblenz, Germany – Feb. 9, 1919

Dear Folks,

Well I have received a letter from you at last, it was written Dec. 2, over two months old, but welcome at that. There is not much to write from here. We never hear anything about going home and that is the news I wish I could write. It is the same old thing day after day and it gets tired some. I consider myself lucky tho as long as can keep well. There is an awful lot of sickness and many of them are dying. I have not had a sick day since I have been here. I am anxious to hear from Bernie again. He is with the 6th Division and I wondered if they were scheduled to return anyways soon. I was reading in the paper not long ago that they were drilling down in France. They always drill the troops before sending them home. I am still working at the same old job. The soldiers have it fine here, they all have to work but the conditions are much better than they had it in France. Today is Sunday and we had to work a half day but we got the afternoon off. We don't have to go work till 8 o'clock in the morning and quit at 1:15 for dinner, and 4:15 at night.

We have been having some real winter the past few days but we have plenty of warm clothes. I went to the Red Cross last week and got sox and a new sweater. We have five blankets to sleep under so there is no use for us to get cold.

There is sure a lot of soldiers in Germany now, more Americans than anyone else. They seem to get along pretty well with the Dutch for some of the fellows even have Dutch girls. I hope to hear from you soon.

Love to all,
Bert BAILEY

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 13, 1919

__dato, Austria – Feb. 7, 1919

Dear Aunt and Uncle – Just a few lines to let you know I am well. I have been transferred to one of the battleships the U.S. has taken charge of by the name of Rodetzky. Every place here looks alike to me. The reason I have not written sooner is on account of no stationery, which is one of the things that is very scarce here.

I got sea sick last week for the first time in ten months, but the old sea was very rough and the big waves would come over the ship and give us a salt water bath every few minutes. Say, I would almost sell my shoes for some American tobacco. I wrote mama last night and tried to cheer her up. I have just finished washing my clothes and that is one job at which I am a professional.

This ship is some big one. I go ashore about twice a week and the next time I go will send you some postcards. I am going over to Salora, Austria, Sunday and look at the old ruins. The town was destroyed about fifteen hundred years ago, but the ruins are still there. I have seen Europe, but I prefer the U.S.A. for mine as that is the only place for me.

Have you looked on the map and seen the places I have been. Be sure and look in the northwestern part of Greece and find Carfu Isalands; that is where I spent the summer. Start looking for Bermuda, and follow it like this: Azores Isalnds, Gibralter, Malta Islands, Carfu, Greece, Albania, Rome, Italy, Lyons, France, Durrazo, Spolato, Austria, and then you can see where I have been and that is only about one half of the places. All our accounts are back in the U.S.A., so that means when we leave here we will go direct to the states and I will be glad to get back. These European cities are awful; they are dirty and the people take no pride in themselves. Everything here is very expensive; the cheapest soap that we can buy is \$1 per bar. We pay 15 kronen and each kronen is worth 6 cents, so you can imagine what it costs us to keep our clothes clean and take a bath every day. The cigarettes we buy cost \$4.00 a hundred and they taste like dry grass. I do not know just how long we will stay here but hope our time is short. I have received no letters for three months, the last one was dated Nov. 20. Must close dear aunt with love.

M.L. HALL

Roedtzky, European Waters

Care of U.S. Olympia; Care P.M., N.Y. City

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 13, 1919

Chester KLINE, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cal KLINE residing southwest of this city, arrived home early Tuesday morning from Camp Grant where he had been sent upon his arrival from France, for demobilization.

He left Kinmundy in February, 1918 and was sent to Camp Taylor where he trained for some time. In September of that same year, he sailed with the 84th Division, with quite a number of Kinmundy boys. Soon after his arrival in France, he was transferred to another division and started toward the front but failed to get into the action before the signing of the armistice.

His many friends here are indeed glad to welcome him home and extend him the greetings due one of “Pershing’s Crusaders.”

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 13, 1919

“The Alma News” section

A telegram from the War Department was received last Saturday by Mrs. Eunice AUSTIN, telling of the death of her son, Lester DORR, who died from bronchial pneumonia, while with the A.E. F. in France. It is an irony of fate that he should have passed thru several battles without a scratch and then died of disease on February 12. He had been expected home sometime and this announcement of his death came as a blow to his mother, who has the sympathy of the entire community.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 27, 1919

Niece, France – Feb. 18, 1919

Dear Mother,

I received your welcome letters alright and am glad to hear from you. I am writing to let you know that I am still in France, am O.K. and having a good time. I am at Niece, a big city on the Mediterranean Sea coast. I am sitting in a Y.M.C.A. building that is built out over the sea writing this letter. I have a 17 day furlough and am going to see all I can down here, this place being called the garden spot of France. It is where the oranges grow. I am visiting Neice, Monte Carlo and Monaco, the prettiest cities in the world, have been up in Italy too. This is a grand place and only wish I could be here all the time while in France, for I do not have it so good when I get back to camp. We leave here the 19th for Camp Eve, near Dejoin, it isn't very far from Verdun. I have been through some of the oldest buildings and castles in the world, Napoleon and Caesar's castles; some of them are 1800 years old. And the castles where they beheaded people in olden times, if they did not have a certain belief.

I do not know when I will get to come home but it some time this summer but not soon as I thought. Do not worry about me for I am in the best of health and am wearing one gold service stripe and will be wearing two before I get home. But we will be there sometime if they don't start up another war and I hope not for we have had enough war. It does not mean health for men and animals that the U.S. boys mustered into service and we showed the French how to muster the Germans out of the country. We fed them Mustard Gas, Edison Gas, Machine Gun bullets and Shrapnel. We mustered them back into Germany where they belonged. We did not have to go up the Rhine River in Germany for when we got through fighting we were relieved and came back for rest. We had been there for 2½ months fighting and got to rest until the Armistice was signed. I hope I never have to go over those bloody battlefields again. Keep on writing till I come home.

Your loving son,

Milburn Jones

Co. F., 303 Ammunition Train

American E.F.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – March 27, 1919

St. Loubes, France – February 15

Mrs. T.M. JONES:

Dear Sister,

Will write you a few lines as I haven't much to do. I came down here last Sunday. Have been having some fine weather but it is raining today. We are billeted in private buildings, 12 miles north of Bordeaux. This is a very beautiful part of France. They don't raise much here but grapes. The climate is very delightful. Fruit trees and flowers are blooming. This week has been like early oat sowing.

We were sure glad to get of the mud at Meheen and living here almost changes ones mind about France. We went thru the delouser at Mehun and stand in the evacuation camp 2 weeks after we were ready to start and we are here now with seemingly good chances of staying here several weeks, but if it doesn't rain too much I can stay here pretty well satisfied. Of course I am anxious to get started home. I got a letter from Milbourn written January 23, he was well and having a good time. From the paper I suppose that Pres. Wilson sails for the U.S. today. It may be some time before peace is established. It is a monstrous problem to settle. There are many things to take into consideration. England may want several things but I don't think they will be unreasonable. The main thing I don't like is that the Kaiser is alive and practically free. I will not be satisfied till he is taken care of. That domineering spirit of the Germans is not yet broken. I have talked to some prisoners since coming here. They blame England for starting the war and say they'll be ready to fight France again in 20 years. So you see peace is not here. They are confident that they would have won the war by now if the U.S. had stayed out. I would hate to think that any time in the next generation or two there could be a repetition of all this suffering. There are many things we can tell when we get home that it might be best not to write. I hope everybody is well at home. If nothing happens, I will be home this spring. I am having a good time and am not worrying about anything. Can't think of much to write so will close.

Cpl. W.L. GREEN

17th Ord. Cas Co., Ohio

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – April 17, 1919

“Three Overseas Soldiers Home”

Three more of our overseas heroes returned this week. All three had been wounded while fighting to make the world a safe place and such are deserving of our undying gratitude and greatest admiration.

Lem MAXWELL, son of W.A. MAXWELL is spending several days here with his father. Although his home is in Witt, he formerly lived here, and we may consider him as one of our boys. He lost three fingers one hand as the result of a shrapnel exploding while serving with a machine gun company.

Xon SIMER, grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Ben TATE, arrived home Wednesday evening. He was the first of our Kinmundy boys to be wounded. He has fully recovered from the _____ of his wound and appears to be none the worse for his experience.

Lieut. Eugene F. PRUETT arrived Thursday morning from Chicago, where he has been in the hospital since his arrival in this country. He was among the most severely wounded of our boys and for some time great concern was felt for him. However, he is now well on the way to complete recovery and his many friends are pleased to see him looking as he does after the ordeal he passed through. Hail conquering three!

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – April 24, 1919

“Four of the Best Reasons Why You Should Subscribe to the Victory Loan”

(4 soldier pictures were included)

“Four Young Men Wounded While Defending Democracy. Return Home Last Week. Not All Have Been Discharged.”

The Fifth or “Victory” Liberty Loan campaign Four and a Half Billion Dollars, began Monday and will continue until May 10th. During this time through newspaper advertising, speaking and otherwise, there will be presented to us many reasons for buying to our limit of these bonds or short-term notes, but we believe that the very best arguments for such acts are presented above. They did not hesitate to offer to give their all in the hour of danger and need for the sake of those they loved at home, then why should we hesitate to loan the least that we have – our money, on the safest and most profitable proposition ever offered. Surely they are deserving of all we can do for them.

We give here with a brief record of the service of two of these young men so that their friends may know something of what they have done.

Walter MILLER, son of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore MILLER, left with one of the draft contingents of this county on Feb. 24, 1919 and was sent to Camp Taylor where he was placed in the 84th Division of which quite a large number of Kinmundy boys were members. On June 7th this Division was transferred to Camp Sherman and thence they departed on September 3rd for Liverpool, England. Upon the arrival of the Division in France, it was disintegrated and the various units were used to replace the diminished ranks of other Divisions. After the shuffle, Walter found himself in the 28th Infantry, 1st Division and was immediately sent to the Verdun front, arriving there on Oct. 29th. After nine days of hard fighting and chasing the Hun, he was wounded by a machine gun bullet, which plowed a furrow across his back, narrowly missing the spinal column. Although it was a very close call, he was able to be moved on December 17, when he sailed for the homeland, arriving at Hoboken, December 30th. He was sent to the hospital at Fort Sheridan and later sent to Camp Taylor he received his honorable discharge on April 12th. He has two brothers who are still in the services, George is still in France, and Ted is with the U.S. forces on the Mexican border stationed at Eagle Pass.

Lem MAXWELL, son of Mr. W. MAXWELL, although not recently a resident of this city, was born and raised here and as his parents still make this their home, we feel that he is one of our boys. Leaving his wife and two young children behind, he enlisted at Hillsboro on Apr. 29, 1918 and was sent to Camp Dix, N.J., where he was placed in the 310th Infantry, 78th Division and after one month of training, sailed for England, landing at Liverpool and after a brief rest period here, he crossed the Channel into France where he trained until the 22nd of August found him on the firing line, taking part in the great St. Mihiel drive which proved the beginning of the end. After 27 days of active fighting, his regiment was relieved for a brief rest and returned to the firing line and it was on the fourth day after his return, that two fingers on his left hand were torn away by shrapnel. The attack in which this happened was immediately followed by the deadly chlorine gas and being unable, with his wound, to adjust his gas mask, suffered the agonies of this choking gas. He was taken to the hospital where he remained until December 27th, when he sailed for home and the loved ones he went out to protect. Arriving at Hoboken he was sent to a hospital at Camp Sherman to complete his recuperation and after four weeks received his honorable discharge. He is now visiting relatives and friends in this city and after spending some time with relatives in Chicago and Indiana will resuming work.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – April 24, 1919

Home From the Navy

Berthel McHATTON, son of Mr. and Mrs. G.V. McHATTON, arrived home last week, having received his honorable discharge from the Navy. He was serving on board the U.S. DOYLE and has been in foreign service for 16 months. His many friends of this community are pleased to see him back again and are prying him with questions concerning his experiences.

Sam LOWE, son of Mr. and Mrs. C.W. LOWE, arrived home last Thursday nite from Camp Grant, having been honorably discharged from the service. Sammie was among the first of the boys of this county to leave in the draft and was sent to Camp Taylor where he was placed in the 84th Division. After many months of training, he was finally sent across last September and since that time has been overseas. His best of friends are glad to welcome him back and assure him of the larger place in their affections to which is entitled. He expects to begin farming operations at once even though it be somewhat late in the season and has rented the Dan Doolen farm, northwest of this city.

Frank DOOLEN arrived home from Camp Custer Wednesday night whither he had been sent for demobilization upon his arrival from overseas where he had been serving for the past eight months. Frank had some actual fighting and has some interesting experiences to relate. We need not say we are glad to welcome home this another one of our heroes.

“The Marion County Express”; Kinmundy, Illinois – May 15, 1919

“Local boy Awarded D.S.C.”

(A picture was included.)

“Leon HANNA is awarded D.S.C. for capture of Machine Gun Nest single Handed.”

“Letter brings first indication.”

Gravevenmacher, Luxemburg – Apr. 19, 1919

Dear Parents, Brothers and Sisters,

I have quite a bit of spare time today, so I will answer your letter of March 30th, which I received in Stienfort a few days ago. Was very glad to note that you were all still blessed with good health and am hoping this finds your conditions unchanged. This leaves me fine and dandy as usual.

I fear our sailing date has been changed a little, but I know we will sail sometime in May. I don't think we will leave Luxbg. before the 25th of this month. I suppose you would like to know why I am in Grevenmacher so I'll just narrate a little in elucidation thereof. The men of the 7th Bn. 131st who are to be decorated with a D.S.C at the next review, which will be held at Ettelbrich, Mon., have been assembled here with Co. A. There are three of us from D. Co., three from C., four from B., and two from A Co. We came here day before yesterday, Thursday.

We were in luck because A. Co. held a big banquet that evening in honor of three of their officers who have been transferred to Divisions that will remain in the Army of Occupation for several months yet. We were invited to attend so of course, we gladly accepted. You might know we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, judging by the enclosed menu for the occasion. Ruby, if your junior banquet beat this one, it will sure be a good one. I would like to get home by the time school is out but I suppose I'll be rather late for commencement exercises.

This is a very pretty town situated on the Moselle River, the natural boundary between Germany and Luxemburg. This is my third trip here. I think I have previously written about being here and going across the river into Germany, have I not? At least I think I have so I'll not bother with a repetition of the same. We did not trouble our selves with carrying our blankets down here and getting billeted some place, so we're stopping at a real nice hotel and acting like gentlemen of leisure. It is a bit expensive but we fell repaid by the additional comforts and conveniences.

We have nothing to do while we are here but report twice a day at Hdqrs. to let them know we are still here so they can find us in case we are needed.

Well tomorrow is Easter and I suppose I will spend the day in Grevenmacher. I have been invited out to dinner in a private home so I know I'll have quite a good time. There are two of us invited to the place Ragner Liluborg and myself. Liluborg was 13 years old when he left Sweden but his 12 years in America, chiefly Chicago and Denver have thoroughly Americanized him. He received the British Military Medal for good work on the Somme offensive at Chipply Ridge and now he will get the American D.S.C.

Hoping this finds all well and that I will be with you soon.

I am,

Leon HANNA

