"Over There" With the American Expeditionary Forces in France During the Great War



In conjunction with an exhibition at the William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor November 2, 2018 - April 26, 2019

In honor of the Centennial Anniversary of the Armistice on November 11, 1918

Curated by Louis Miller

Contents

Introduction	3
Training in the States	4
The Trip Over	
Behind the Lines, Impressions of "Over There"	12
News from Home	19
The Censor	24
Combat and Loss	27
End of the War and Going Home	37
Appendix	
Selection of 101 Collections of	
World War I Manuscripts and Visual Materials .	41



Above: "The edge." C. Leroy Baldridge, "I was there" with the Yanks on the Western Front, 1917-1919 (New York, 1919).

Cover: Oscar Abraham Price in France (father of longtime Clements benefactor Jacob M. Price). Oscar Abraham Price Collection.

Back Cover: "Company Front." Ole Reppe Postcard Collection.



Introduction



Approximately 2 million men and women served in France as part of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) during the First World War. Over 53,000 of them died from combat. The William L. Clements Library exhibit "Over There" With the American Expeditionary Forces in France During the Great War and this accompanying pamphlet aim to present the experiences of ordinary Americans who served in France.¹ While the bulk of the Clements Library's holdings predate 1900, this institution has built a significant collection of manuscripts and visual materials relating to the First World War as illustrated by the following excerpts. These quotations replicate the idiosyncratic spellings and punctuation of the originals, except in rare instances where doing so would make the meaning difficult to understand. Brief biographical information is included on each soldier whose words are quoted, when known. The accompanying visuals also come from the Clements Library's collections.

¹ Unfortunately this pamphlet contains none of the written words of the approximately 180,000 African-Americans who served in France. The Clements Library does not currently hold any such material. The institutionalized racist treatment of African-Americans within the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) cannot be overlooked when discussing this country's participation in the First World War. The relative scarcity of firsthand accounts by African-American soldiers in conjunction with racial biases, both conscious and unconscious, affected what type of material was retained, preserved, and collected in archives. A dearth of material is also the reason that only one of the excerpts to follow comes from the pen of a woman despite the fact that over 16,000 women served with the AEF in France.



Training in the States

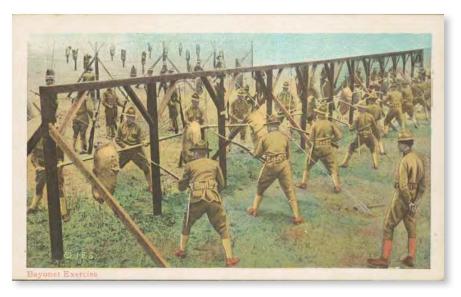


When the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, it was in no position to send an army to Europe. The American Army was an undersized, tactically obsolete fighting force. In April 1917, the Regular Army consisted of 133,000 men and 5,800 officers, while the National Guard consisted of 67,000 men and 3,200 officers. Considering that the British Army suffered 60,000 casualties on July 1, 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, American officials did not expect American infantry to contribute to the war effort until 1919. By the end of the conflict on November 11, 1918, the number of Americans in various branches of the army numbered over 4 million, of which 2.8 million were draftees. Historians have severely criticized the training that these soldiers received as ineffective and outdated.

"Frank," December 18, 1917. Camp Devens, Massachusetts.²

"The officers are explaining the easiest way to kill the enemies without getting killed ourselves. Sounds very blood curdling. We should pull a bayonet out straight as it will not stick in the patient's ribs as the next man might get you before you can pull it out."

² Frank's full identity is unknown. The Clements Library has letters sent by Frank to his mother and siblings while he trained at Camp Devens, Massachusetts. Frank's letters are in the *Camp Devens (Mass.) Letters, 1917-1918.*



"Bayonet Exercise." Ole Reppe Postcard Collection.

Thomas Knowles, September 11, 1917. Boston, Massachusetts.³

"Tonight we have to attend a lecture given by an officer of the French Mission on 'the affect of shell fire.' I dont care for the blame lectures at all. The last one we had was given by one of the French officers and we couldn't tell half of what he said. I went to sleep. I know it wasent very polite, but I had done a hard day's work and was tired. I am afraid the same thing will happen tonight. Darn the old lectures anyway."

³ Thomas Knowles (b. 1896) of Massachusetts served abroad in the 101st Engineer Regiment. He was wounded in combat in May of 1918. After spending two months recuperating in the hospital, he received an assignment to a non-combat role with press section G-2-D, returning home in 1919. During his service, Knowles wrote extensively to an acquaintance, Ruth Blaisdell of Waltham, Massachusetts. All of Knowles's quotations come from the *Thomas Knowles Collection*, 1917-1919, Duane Norman Diedrich Collection (hereafter DNDC).

Fred McGill, September 4, 1917. Camp Mills, New York.⁴

"Last night about (35) thirty five fellows that were absent came in about ten o'clock and they were singing 'Hail! Hail! the gangs all here.' and the Captain walked out and told them they were under arrest and you could see there faces drop and then they went down the Co. street singing at the top of there lungs 'When All the Sunshine turns to Gloom.' Gee it was funny one of the bunch was from our tent and he kept us awake half the night telling about the good time he had in the City."



Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here (New York, 1917).
Sheet Music Collection.

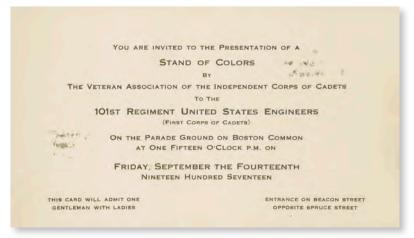
Laurence Benedict, April 18, 1918. Camp Dick, Texas.⁵

"Camp Dick is some bad place and they aim to work us pretty

⁴ Frederick John McGill (1894-1984) was born in Sea Cliff, New York. He served in the 165th Infantry Regiment, which saw heavy front-line service. After returning home in 1919, he married his longtime sweetheart, Louise A. Rochat (1895-1973). All of McGill's quotations used in this pamphlet come from his correspondence with Louise in the *Frederick McGill Collection*, 1917-1919, DNDC. ⁵ Laurence M. Benedict (1897-1970) was born in Delaware, Ohio.

He served as a second lieutenant in the Air Service during the war. Upon his return, he graduated from Ohio Wesleyan College and had a decades-long career as a United Press correspondent while living in San Francisco, California. He mainly wrote to his mother while in the service, but he also wrote to his father and grandmother. Laurence Benedict's letters, along with those of his brother, Harley, who also served in the war, are in the *Harley and Laurence Benedict Correspondence*, 1917-1919.

hard. I said 'aim too,' because I sometimes outwit them. This afternoon is an example. Here I am taking it easy while the rest are out drilling and working. The secret is, that I'm on a committee arranging for a big dance to be given by the Cadets next Wed. and you never saw a committee that had to get together so often and held such long sessions. Yesterday we—There are eight—spent the entire time down-town, laying our plans. The hop is to be a big one and we expect at least 3000 there so you can see there is really a lot to lookout for, refreshments, decorating, transportation, facilities, enough girls, rest rooms and the like."



Invitation to 101st Engineers "stand of colors" presentation. Thomas Knowles Collection, DNDC.

F. C. Stone, September 17, 1918. Somewhere in France.⁶

"Talking about Southern girls did I tell you the terrible time I had down in Spartanburg with one fair maiden I was very attentive to her most the time we were there and I tell you we had some swell parties together in her little 'reclining runabout.' Well to make a long story short, she thought we were

⁶ F. C. Stone's full identity is unknown. He wrote the above quotation in a letter to a Mr. Carrington Beeman of New York City. Stone's letter comes from the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

engaged & wrote to me some time after we left & then by some unknown manner found I was engaged to another girl. Well, you should have read the letter I got after that happened. Whup-s-s-s-s-s-t!! Well thats all over with now, but I sure do manage to get in bad somehow dont I."



"Playing Cards." Ole Reppe Postcard Collection.

Harold Kamp, December 23, 1917. Camp Merritt, New Jersey.⁷

"We have only two topics of conversation now—the date of departure and our destination. Both are wrapped in deep mystery, with our scope of speculation unlimited. The game is interesting only intensely annoying to one's own state of mind. Conjecture rages most fiercely—we assume—among those in higher authority, in regard to interesting information, although to the rank and file (the private) it must always remain a closed book; unattainable and inaccessible."

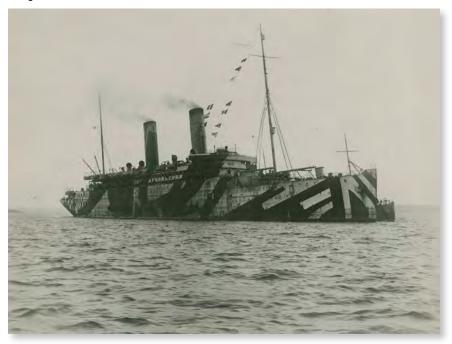
⁷ Harold Kamp (1895-1942) was born in Fresno, California. He served as a private in the 146th Field Artillery. After returning home, he became an executive at his father's department store, Radin & Kamp, before spending the last few years of his life cultivating a vineyard in the Selma area. The Clements holds Kamp's wartime diary, the *Harold Kamp Journal*, 1917-1919, DNDC.



The Trip Over



Most American soldiers sent to France left New York Harbor (including Brooklyn and Hoboken) on a transport ship, guarded by a naval escort, before arriving in either Liverpool, England, or Brest, France. Other ports of embarkation included Newport News, Virginia, and Halifax, Canada. The trip over took approximately two weeks. While there were some comforts on board such as music and other forms of entertainment, seasickness was a constant source of irritation, and the fear of a U-Boat attack was ever-present. Ships were painted in "razzle dazzle" camouflage, a striking mix of black and white abstract shapes meant to confuse U-Boats from accurately gauging distances for successful torpedo strikes.



British Troop Transport *Caronia*, Brest Harbor, France. *United States Signal Corps Photograph Collection.*More than half the Americans who saw service in France crossed the Atlantic in foreign vessels, primarily British ships such as the *Caronia*.

Bert C. Whitney, July 10, 1918. New York Harbor.⁸

"Shes a mammoth boat and it takes about ten minutes to walk from one end to the other. Shes rocking a bit and feel a little unsteady. Have been down in the ships officers mess and had a meal of my life But ye gods Im sick. Had pork chops—Lettuce salad oh man that salad was great—French fried potato two other kinds of meat—bread and butter—Jam and strawberries for dessert—cant hardly believe my eyes and ears—after getting what we have had in the past—but I am afraid Im going to loose it—Am going to bed. Shes rocking like an egg shell."

Clarence E. Burt, June [day censored], 1918. At Sea.⁹ "During the days that we have been in the war zone we have been required to be fully dressed night and day and wear a life preserver. Not at all comfortable especially since one cannot bathe. The food has been good of course it gets

⁸ Bert C. Whitney (1893-1973) was born in Washington, Michigan. He worked at the Detroit United Railway before joining the 304th

Sanitary Train in October of 1917. After returning from France, he was a builder in Detroit, Michigan. The Clements holds Whitney's wartime diary, the Bert C. Whitney Diary, 1918-1919. ⁹ Clarence E. Burt (1886-1965) was born in Massachusetts. He graduated from the Boston University School of Medicine in 1908 and operated a private practice in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He served as a first lieutenant in the Medical Reserve Corps from 1913-1917 before joining the regular army on December 28, 1917. In France, he was a surgeon with the 183rd Infantry Brigade. After returning home, he spent time in Walter Reed Hospital recovering from injuries received in the line of duty. His fellow veterans elected him as Massachusetts state commander of the Disabled American Veterans of the World War in 1923. His name adorns the DAV chapter in New Bedford. The above quotation, and all the rest of Burt's words within this pamphlet, come from his correspondence with his aunt and uncle, Addie and Charles H. Mosher, in the Clarence E. Burt Papers, 1918.

tiresome and tastes all about the same after a few days. On the way over the gunners shot at pieces of wreckage and floating barrels for fear they might be concealing subs or mines. All lights go out at sunset. No one is allowed to have matches, flashlights etc. with them on board."

Harold Kamp, December 29, 1917. At Sea.

"Heavy seas were encountered since leaving Halifax. The sky is dull, with the waves white-foamed and breaking over the decks. The ship pitches continuously and incessantly, a motion in all directions, causing one to delight in ocean travel. I am now in the fullest agonies of seasickness, only desiring one thing, to keep close to my bunk. Such a nasty feeling, and no chance of finding relief."

Name	France	A A	ME	eres	Berth 1	No. 10	3-Star
					Compt, N	11	
Detacl	ment 16	5 MS	INF	B.M	Deck 1	io	2
Oo or	Board via	Gangwa	y No	3			
Aband	on Ship in	Boat No	32	F	Raft Lot N	lo	
Direct	ions to Boa	t or Raft	from n	ny berth	:Forwar	ed to	Barber
Shop	then upout to	o eire	Tor	atata	non-re-	Bank	

Billet card for USS Agamemnon. Frederick McGill Collection, DNDC.



Behind the Lines, Impressions of "Over There"



Many of the American soldiers arriving overseas had never left their home state before joining the service. As a result, soldiers' letters and diaries often depict France as an exotic place. Much of the correspondence from members of the AEF to their loved ones back home reads like tourists' descriptions of travels, focusing on details such as food, clothing, historic sites, local children, and the French love for red wine.

Harold Kamp, January 14, 1918. Le Havre, France.

"We quit the British Rest Camp to do special detail work, before entraining for the training camp. At Havre we were loaded on freight cars of the miniature variety. A placard on the side door read—40 Hommes, or 8 chavaux; translated, 40 men or 8 horses. As the train pulled out of the station singing songs, a British Tommy, looking on in wonderment, shouted, 'A jolly old war, isn't it?'"

David C. Cottrell, February 12, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹⁰

"Last night, as I was going to my room one of the boys here called me. There were three frenchmen by a pile of flour and there was not strength enough among them to lift two

¹⁰ David C. Cottrell (1884-1918) was born in California. He first enlisted in the army in 1906, serving until his honorable discharge in 1910. When war broke out, he enlisted once again, first joining the 18th Engineer Regiment before his transfer to the 146th Field Artillery Regiment. He died in France at an army hospital from the effects of gas on April 19, 1918. His body was brought back to San Joaquin County, California, for burial in 1920. The Clements Library holds some of his extensive correspondence with his girlfriend, Ethel M. Jury, in the *Cottrell-Jury Correspondence*, 1917-1918.

houndred pounds of flour, so four of us put it in the shelter for them. While we were doing this, there being about two tons of it, two little boys scraping up flour that had spilled on the ground commenced to fight over it and one of them kicked the other in the stumick. Believe me it sounded hollow."

Clarence E. Burt, July 2, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"All the land we saw was under cultivation, and it



Aged French Laborer. *United States* Signal Corps Photograph Collection.

seemed to be hay making time. The workers were all women, old men or children. One seldom sees an abled bodied man anywhere between the age of 20 and 60."

Thomas Knowles, October 25, 1917. Somewhere in France.

"Our quarters now are in a little old French town, just behind the lines. We, the engineers, are in billets, that is divided up among the houses and barns of the village. Everything is quaint and old-fashioned, and a never-ending source of interest and wonder to me. The old red-tiled houses and narrow streets, and the peasants in the curious and picturesque dresses. The people will do almost anything for us. The[y] like the Americans. We have lots of fun trying to understand their lingo. I brought three French-English dictionaries along with me, and am trying hard to learn."

Fred C. Wagner, July 1, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹¹

"Many many customs differ from those in the States but we are all trying to adjust ourselves to circumstances and at the same time pick up a little French. In fact I get right out among the French for I find that is the best way to learn the language a 'wee' bit. At present I know two of the nicest kiddies across the river—a little lad of thirteen—but small for his age, and a demoiselle of eleven years. I had them out to a 'movie' show one night and they enjoyed themselves immensely. There I carry them little dainties such as candy, gum, chocolate bars etc., such as can not be obtained by the French people in France. Another comerade and I almost consider them our proteges. There are any numbers of little French children here who have been adopted by different companies who pay so much a month for their care. It is a very common sight to see some little fellow about seven or eight years dressed in a wee U.S. army outfit—complete even to leggings."

¹¹ Fred Calvin Wagner (ca. 1898-1918) was born in Rolla, North Dakota. He completed two years at the University of North Dakota before transferring to Macalester College. Shortly after the entry of the United States into the war, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He was sent overseas as part of the 150th Company, 1st Machine Gun Replacement Battalion but was later transferred to the Marine 6th Regiment. On July 19, 1918, in the Château Thierry drive, he was killed while trying to carry wounded to a nearby first aid station. His body was never recovered. His name is among the missing at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial. The local American Legion post in Rolla is named in his honor. Wagner wrote the above letter to his Aunt Nealie Van Pelt. This letter is in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.



Doughboys Enjoying Ice Cream. Dorothy T. Arnold Collection.

Stephen D. Brown, June 2, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹²

"Visited a drill field some distance out of camp for gas drill. Country very flat with rows of poplar trees and windmills all about. Cap Jones started cussing some French kids who were trying to sell 'Oranchees' while we were moving, and these gained the good-will of the company by imitating him and making insulting gestures."

¹² Stephen D. Brown (1892-1980) was born in Washington, D.C., but moved with his family as a child to Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the Pennsylvania National Guard in July of 1917. Although denied entrance into the officer corps because of poor eyesight, he became a member of the 103rd Engineer Regiment. He served in France from May 1918 until July 1919. He returned to Lansdowne after the war and worked as a chemical engineer. Brown's correspondence and diary entries while in the army come from the *Stephen D. Brown Diaries*, *1917-1919*.

Raymond Diggins, September 21, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹³

"You will meet fellows from every state in the Union. This war will do more to unite the East, West, North and South at home, then could be accomplished in a century of ordinary dickering. It's common now to see an Alaskan snow-shoeing trail breaker chumming around with a remodelled tango dancer from Narragansett Pier or a Texas Ranger showing a New York floor-walker how to roll a cigarette with one hand."

Laurence Benedict, September 9, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"I'm making great progress in French and by this time am pretty familiar with the currency here...For a while I'd sell a hundred franc note anytime for a good, old American dime. And for a few days the boys had quite a time 'shooting' Craps with the strange money but they can't be fooled now and they're shouting 'five francs' with the same lust as they formerly did 'One buck' only they usually refer to the French bills as 'rags.' Even if this is a poor part of France it seems they should have some good looking women but so far I haven't glimpsed any and my eyes are pretty good when it comes to that. Another thing we'll appreciate when we get back to God's country. I just stopped here to join in the general rush to the canteen where a load of chocolate arrived. No one is allowed more than two bars but I managed to get four by going back twice."

¹³ Raymond Diggins (1888-1964) was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts. He served as a private in the Machine Gun Company of the 302nd Infantry. He married Winifred G. Auburn, secretary at the Wall Street firm in which he worked, on December 27, 1923. The couple moved to the Boston area, where they lived until Raymond's death. Winifred died in 2000. The above excerpt is from a letter addressed to Bostonian W. Hector S. Kollinger. The Clements holds this item in the *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

Benjamin Furman, February 24, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹⁴

"This morning was a red letter day—we all got a bath—that is, all except Mademoiselle the dog and she needed it more than any of us. She is the new member of our family. She is evidently lost and has taken a great liking to me and follows me all over. I told Helen all about her in one of my letters to her. I hate to repeat. Yesterday she insisted on following the ambulances when I started out so I had to stop and put her in and cart her all the way to Co E and back."

Benjamin Furman, August 18, 1918. Evacuation Hospital #2, Baccarat, France.

"The nurses live in the same building I do. They have a sign over the entrance to their quarters, 'No Man's Land. Keep Out."

Harold Kamp, February 22, 1918. Base Hospital #6, Bordeaux, France.

"The American soldier's trench talk is varied. He calls himself, a doughboy. A soldier who shares his shelter is his 'bunkie,' the company barber is a 'butcher'; the commanding officer is a 'K.O.' a junior officer is a 'goat'; the doctor is 'sawbones'; a new second-lieutenant is a 'shave-tail,' field artillerymen are 'wagon-soldiers,' and our soldiers never 'belly-ache' or complain when the 'slum,' that is, the meat or soup, or the 'sowbelly' as the bacon is called are bad. It's all in the game—the game of 'Kan the Kaiser."

¹⁴ Benjamin Applegate Furman (1883-1967) was born in Newark, New Jersey. He graduated from Princeton University in 1906 and then earned a medical degree from Columbia University in 1910. He had a private practice in Newark while also working for the Presbyterian Hospital. After joining the Army in 1917, he served in France as a surgeon for the 407th Telegraph Battalion and at Evacuation Hospital No. 2. After the war, he returned to Newark where he continued his medical work until his retirement a few years before his death. All of Furman's quotations within this pamphlet are from letters to his parents, John A. and Emma C. Furman, held in the *Benjamin A. Furman Collection*, 1917-1919, DNDC.

Laurence Benedict, October 22, 1918. Saint Maixent, France.

"This is the worst war I was ever in. Here I am still loafing, and I'm getting darned good at it by this time. I really think I'll be getting out soon now tho' I don't know where I'll go, sure that it will be frontward, and can't say that I care much where they do send me. It's tough to be so versatile that they don't know where to put you. I'll know more in the next war. You know what the next war will be don't you? We, of the air service, are going to fight Mexico and make it take Texas back."



"The letter from home." C. Leroy Baldridge, "I was there" with the Yanks on the western front, 1917-1919 (New York, 1919).



News from Home



Writing to friends and family back in the United States, members of the AEF emphasized how much they valued receiving letters. Soldiers were constantly begging for updates from home. Copies of hometown newspapers were much sought after, as were magazines and books. Mail delays were frequent, with letters often taking months to arrive. Many soldiers and their loved ones attempted to resolve the potential misunderstandings caused by lost or delayed correspondence by numbering each letter they sent, so that if one went missing it would be obvious to the recipient.

Fred S. Hurd, January 18, 1919. Base Hospital #109, Vichy, France.¹⁵

"A lad sitting next to me here in this fine big Red X [American Red Cross] reading & writing room just told me he rec'd 47 letters yesterday, some as far back as June. He is hard at it answering them all the same as I am. I answer all I receive and sometimes write 6 for every one I get."

David C. Cottrell, March 17, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"Thank you ever so much for the clippings little girl. I read them all. The one about Stanley V. mother dying I read and distroyed as it said his enlisting had hastened her end. I would have given it to him but for that."

¹⁵ Frederick S. Hurd (ca. 1889-1953) of Buffalo, New York, served as a private in Company K of the 306th Infantry. The quotation comes from a letter Hurd wrote to his sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. James in West Springfield, Pennsylvania. Two letters by Hurd are in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

Thomas Knowles, March 22, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"Our detail came in covered with mud from head to foot, as it has been raining steadily for several days, and I spent most of the time in a muddy hole we were digging. Well I was feeling pretty well all in, but didnt I brighten up when one of the boys hollered, 'Hey Tommy the mails in, and theres a corking box for you.' Then in came two of them marching with it, one on the front, and one on the back. They paraded solomnly up and laid it reverently on my bunk. Well I was tickled and then we started to open it. We went at it first with a bayonet, until the owner began to object rather strenuously, so we had to look around for something else. It wasnt long before someone found an axe, and that did the trick. We certainly had a feed, and the books were great. I have a regular list of guys who are in line for them. They will certainly have a wide circulation, I can tell you."

Grace D. Banker, September 10, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹⁶

"Indeed I realize that it is a long while since I have written you, but time to write is pretty scarce these days. Then too I

¹⁶ Grace D. Banker (1892-1960) was born in Passaic, New Jersey. She graduated from Barnard College in 1915 and began work as a telephone switchboard instructor. The Signal Corps issued a demand in November of 1917 for women volunteers fluent in French to serve as telephone operators overseas. These volunteers eventually gained the nickname of "Hello Girls." Banker was the leader of the first unit of Hello Girls sent to France. She served over 20 months in Europe and received the Distinguished Service Medal for her meritorious service during the Saint Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives. After the war, she returned to civilian life, married, and had four children. She died in Scarsdale, New York, on December 17, 1960. The United States government did not recognize the Hello Girls as veterans until 1979. Banker wrote the above quotation in a letter to her friend, Georgette Poulard, of Passaic, New Jersey. The Clements holds material related to Banker's time in France in the Grace D. Banker Collection. 1918.

didn't have the heart to scribble many lines when I heard of my Father's death. I don't think I ever realized how far away I was until then. However so many homes are grieving these days that I feel as if I have no right to think over much of my own sorrow."

Earl H. Hobson, October 30, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹⁷

"What a miracle it will be dear for our union to be blessed with a little child, to love and to train



Portrait of Grace D. Banker. Grace D. Banker Collection.

I'm sure I want the little fellow to have every prospect and I'm oh so happy that during the years past that I have lived clean for the little fellow deserves a good start. I don't see why he shouldn't be the bestest little fellow ever, having such

¹⁷ Earl Harold Hobson (1889-1971) was born in Cranston, Rhode Island. During the war, he served with the 301st Ammunition Train. Before going to France, he married Maybell O. Kingsley (1891-1960). He received word of Maybell's pregnancy while in France and was overjoyed by the news, as the above excerpt shows. Sadly, Maybell suffered a miscarriage while her husband was still abroad. After the war, Hobson returned to Rhode Island and worked for the YMCA. Maybell and Earl went on to raise two children. The Clements holds Earl's letters to Maybell in the *Earl H. Hobson Papers*, 1918-1919, DNDC.

a splendid ma. You see already I am expecting a boy. Gee! Wouldn't it be great! But if the child is a girl I shall be equally pleased. But you know dear, I don't know much about girls."

Gerald D. Nelson, October 5, 1918. Tours, France.¹⁸

"Now you tell that big, freckle faced, flat footed husband of yours that if he doesn't treat you like the princess of the royal Irish blood that you are, even tho he is four or five sizes larger than little me, I'm a comin' back and reduce him to the original and eventual dust—Also tell him that I like him 'fine' except for the deformities given as of the first and second lines of this paragraph."

Brewster E. Littlefield, October 17, 1918. Somewhere in France.¹⁹

"Dear Dad . . . This is the first I have written to you, although you have seen Mother's letters, since my dear brother Frank passed on. I most certainly know how hard a blow it must have been to you and Mother. But yesterday I had an encouraging letter from Mr Dunham telling me how well you were taking it and my mind was at ease. I was heartbroken when I received Mother's cable and then I became very

¹⁸ Gerald D. Nelson (1892-1975) was born in Wassaic, New York. He graduated from Harvard University in 1914. Before enlisting in the AEF, where he was an officer in the Motor Transport Corps, he served as a volunteer ambulance driver in the French Army. After the war, he worked for RCA in Princeton, New Jersey. The quotation comes from a letter written by Nelson to his sister Gertrude on her wedding day and is held in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

¹⁹ Brewster E. Littlefield (1896-1918) was born in Braintree, Massachusetts. He arrived in France in October 1917 as a member of the 101st Engineer Regiment. He went on to become a gas mask specialist with the rank of master engineer. Littlefield wrote the above letter to his father after receiving news of his older brother Frank's death from Spanish Influenza in Massachusetts on September 19, 1918.

fearful for you folks. I didn't know how you would take it; but I am so glad that you are doing so well. Say, Dad, don't let Mother worry about me, will you? Assure her all you can that I am all right and in no danger. I would have given most anything to have been home and comfort you both; but I'm not, I'm over here playing the game, and must play it like a soldier should."



Photograph of Brewster E. Littlefield.

Brewster E. Littlefield Collection, 1917-1941, DNDC.

On November 2, 1918, Littlefield was struck in the head by a piece of shrapnel, dying later that day. His body was brought back from France in 1921 and interned at Blue Hill Cemetery in Braintree, Massachusetts. Littlefield's correspondence with his parents, and letters sent to his parents after his death, are in the *Brewster E. Littlefield Collection*, 1917-1941, DNDC.



The Censor



All mail sent by members of the AEF was subject to censorship, with offending passages clipped or blotted out of the letter. Officers censored their men's mail in addition to their own. Most members of the AEF practiced self-censorship, as they had been taught to do as part of their training. Among other restrictions, soldiers were not to mention the towns or localities they occupied, discuss troop movements, use any sort of cipher, or have letters published in newspapers. Officers were not supposed to discuss the letters they censored, but inevitably, it happened. One lieutenant quipped, "Of course I'm not supposed to tell what I read but I had to laugh at one guy who wrote to his wife telling her how he loved her etc., and then he wrote to 3 or 4 other dames at the <u>same time</u> giving them a line of gush."²⁰

John Roy Brokenshire, post June 23, 1917. U.S.S. *Louisiana*.²¹

"There are a 1000 and 1 little things of interest that come up every day, things of no particular military interest either

²⁰ This quotation comes from a letter sent by Lt. Ernest B. Drake to his mother on January 27, 1918, in the *Ernest B. Drake Papers, 1908-1996* held at the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library. The Bentley Historical Library has a wide variety of manuscript, printed, and visual materials related to Michigan soldiers in the First World War. They are the primary repository for material on the Allied intervention into northern Russia, also known as the Polar Bear Expedition.

²¹ John Roy Brokenshire (1894-1940) was born in Cook County, Illinois. He attended the University of Michigan before enlisting in the Navy prior to American entry into the war. He served on the U.S.S. *Louisiana* as well as at the Boston Navy Yard. Although as a sailor Brokenshire was not part of the AEF, this quotation written in a letter to his friend, Lillian Dow of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, articulates the frustrations of censorship, a bond shared by soldier and sailor alike. Brokenshire's correspondence is in the *John Roy Brokenshire Letters*, 1917.



Censored Envelope. William M. Schmidt letter, November 11, 1917. WWI Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC.

which would pass the censors ok; but still I cannot write them to you—for all our mail is read over by officers on this very ship. They gather around a table downstairs every evening, and they read choice selections from the letters that they are censoring to each other, and they get a good many laughs, I can tell you. Knowing, Father, they notice mine pretty carefully I know. It's like having one's letters read over by one's neighbors and friends—think how you'd like that—then you'll know how I feel writing from here. And so if my letters sound flat and constrained you'll know why."

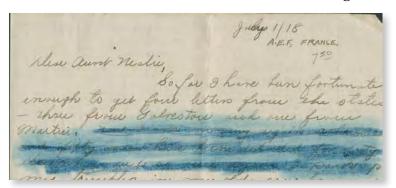
Glenn Pollock, July 9, 1918. Somewhere in France.²²

"I have lots to write, but owing to the present conditions, I am out of luck, and have to write things that will pass inspection."

²² Glenn Pollock (1894-1947) was born in McBride, Michigan. He served in the 20th Engineer Regiment while in France. After the war, he moved to Los Angeles where he worked as a real estate broker. He wrote the above quotation in a letter to his parents, James and Ida Pollock. Glenn and his brother Frank's wartime letters to their parents are in the *Frank and Glenn Pollock Letters*, 1917-1919.

Benjamin Furman, November 5, 1917. Somewhere in France.

"We officers censor our own and our mens mail. Then it is sealed and marked 'O.K. + officer's name' in the left hand lower corner. Then the Battalion adjutant, without opening any of it stamps it 'Passed as censored A.E.F.' Then it all goes to the Base Censor. He picks out at random a certain percentage of the letters (about 5%—maybe less) and opens & reads them. Thus we are checked on our censoring."



Censored portion of Fred C. Wagner letter, July 1, 1918.

WWI Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC. As can be seen from this example, not every censor succeeded in rendering offending phrases unreadable by scribbling over them.

Claude O. Davis, July 11, 1918. Somewhere in France.²³

"Gee but I bet you will be suprised to hear exactly where we are. You was always trying to find out when we were up above. But believe me I wasn't going to take any chances of going to the lock up just to let you know what town I was billeted in. But I cant see why you didn't know for I done every thing but tell you."

26

²³ Claude O. Davis (1894-1971) was born in Washington State. He served in Company F of the 161st Infantry Regiment. The regiment never saw active duty; its men transferred to other combat units as replacements. Davis wrote the above quotation in a letter to his mother, Mrs. R. A. Davis, in Mount Vernon, Washington. This letter is in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection. DNDC*.



Combat and Loss



Of the 320,000 casualties incurred by the AEF, over 53,000 troops died in combat. Most of these deaths occurred in the last weeks of the war during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive (September 26-November 11, 1918). Over one hundred Base Hospitals operated in France and England to treat wounded soldiers. Shrapnel, rifle, and machine gun fire inflicted the majority of casualties. Poisonous gas, while a major psychological weapon on the Western Front, caused many fewer casualties. The First World War also saw the origin of the phrase "shell shock," used to describe soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Untested American military tactics and insufficient training proved costly in terms of casualties when the AEF experienced combat on the Western Front. According to historian James W. Rainey, "the AEF succeeded not because of imaginative operations and tactics nor because of qualitative superiority, but by smothering German machine guns with American flesh."



An unidentified victim of trench warfare. Dorothy T. Arnold Collection.

Thomas Knowles, June 5, 1918. Base Hospital #18, Bazoilles-sur-Meuse, France.

"It was somewhere around one o'clock in the morning when a platoon of us were caught in the German barrage, and we were at once ordered to break for cover, which we started out to do with a will. I will certainly never forget that morning. It was pitch dark, and the shells were breaking all around us. filling the air with flashes, flying splinters, and thick black powder smoke, and poisonous gas. How I ever got through it all I will never know. Every minute I expected to be hit but I wasnt until—I was just diving down into a dug out when, whiz, crash, came a high explosive clean through the roof. Lucky I wasn't inside. That was the last I knew for a while, and when I came to, I tried to get up, but could not, so I just crawled into another dug out and dragged on my gas mask. The next thing I knew I was being carried to a first aid station, where a doctor bandaged me up, and put me to bed until the ambulance arrived."

Death Report, Elvin O. Olson. 361st Infantry, Company I.²⁴

"Because of his cheery disposition, Private Elvin O. Olson was known in company I as 'Sunshine.' He and Sergeant

²⁴ This and the following excerpt come from the *American Red Cross 91st Division Death Reports* held by the Clements Library. A single man, Colin Victor Dyment (1879-1928), compiled this unique record while working as a Red Cross searcher for the 91st Division. Dyment made it his mission to obtain and summarize the details of the deaths of the more than 1,300 men in the division who died in France. Copies of his findings were sent to the relatives of the deceased. He also assembled the records into a 47-part serial published in both the *Oregonian* and the *Seattle Daily Times* in 1919. A Canadian by birth, he was a newspaperman in Washington and Oregon before becoming a professor of journalism at the University of Oregon in 1913. After the war, Dyment returned to work at the University of Oregon. Typescript copies of the reports he compiled are held in the *American Red Cross, 91st Division Death Reports, 1917-1931, DNDC*.

Howard Wight, who in civil life is professor of economic zoology at the Oregon Agricultural College, Corvallis, Ore., were runners together in company I. On the night of September 30, in the first phase of the Argonne drive, Sergeant Wight had been sent up to get someone to accompany him on a mission, and got Olson. That night they dug in together, and thereafter until Olson was killed, the two slept together and were seldom apart. 'He was the most willing man I was with on the front,' said Sergeant Wight. 'He wanted to do more than his share, and to take more than his part of the danger. He had worked out for himself the best mental condition I have seen in a man. He surely was fine, and he helped put me on my feet in every way. One night,—I think it was October 2 or 3,—the Germans were putting down a heavy barrage, and during that barrage, 'mid the shells, we talked. 'Sunshine' made some such statement as this: 'I don't believe in being foolhardy and throwing myself into unnecessary danger, but when the shell that is for me comes, I am going to take it.'

'He slept every night with his helmet tilted over his head, and thought it foolish that I didn't do so always. His idea was to evade disfigurement if he were hit; this illustrated the fine care he took of himself, although he was without fear.

'Two nights before he was killed, I had been up all night, and he refused next day to let me do anything. This was October 8. On the morning of October 9, we started out at 8 a.m. in the smoke barrage thrown by our thermite batteries. We went side by side. We stopped at the battalion P. C. He was in fine spirits, as he always was, being 'Sunshine.' The battalion P.C. took up a position below a hill, and I was sent to get company I together. Private Olson stepped over into the

Elvin Oscar Olson (1889-1918) was born in Avon, Wisconsin. When he registered for the draft on June 4, 1917, he worked for the Oregon Short Line Railroad in Pocatello, Idaho. He was killed by machine gun fire on October 9, 1918. Olson's body is buried at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and Memorial in France.

woods with some other men to take cover. Perhaps it would have been better if he stayed below the bank.

'Bullets from machine guns from [Hill] 255 were raking the woods. He was hit while standing. The bullet struck his head. He had said, according to another runner who was close by him, 'I'm going back,' but a moment later he was hit, and fell dead. One of the hardest things I had to do was to pass his body.'"

Death Report, Samuel I. Brodnax. 316th Engineers, Company E.²⁵

"As he lay on the roadway between the two forests, awaiting the arrival of an ambulance, Private Brodnax's thoughts were principally of his mother. He showed a letter from her to a passer-by [Dyment], and faintly told how badly he wanted to get back to her.

The passer-by was the writer, who said to Private Brodnax, 'How are you, Buddy?' 'Oh,' he said, 'I'm awful sick.' 'Where were you hit?' asked the writer. He answered, 'In the stomach.' Suddenly he said, 'I got a letter from my mother last week. Would you like to read it?' To please him, he was told 'Yes,' and after hunting around inside his coat he was finally able to pull out a packet of five letters, one from a brother, one from a sister, one from a girl friend, one from his mother, and one from someone else. It seemed to satisfy him to have his mother's letter examined. 'This will be the last drive, won't it?' he said. 'I want to get back to my old mother.' Soon after, an ambulance arrived, and Private Brodnax was picked

30

²⁵ Samuel Irvin Brodnax (1896-1918) was born in Chattahoochee County, Georgia. He enlisted in the Army in June 1917 and sailed overseas on June 20, 1918 as part of Camp Wheeler's Company #5, June Replacement Draft. Upon arrival in France, he transferred to Company E of the 316th Engineers and died on October 4, 1918 of wounds received in action on September 26, 1918. Brodnax's parents elected to have his body brought back from France in 1921. His grave is at the New Providence Baptist Church Cemetery in Muscogee County, Georgia.

up and started for the hospital. As he was being carried off, he said, 'You won't tell Mother I am dead, will you?' To the stretcher-bearers he said, 'Don't drop me, boys.' A few days later the writer happened to see the following entry in the hospital records at Evacuation No. 10, at Froidos: 'Samuel I. Brodnax, private, company E, 316th Engineers, 1,342,519, admitted September 26, g.s.w. [gunshot wound] in abdomen, died October 4.'"

George Oglesby, October 23, 1918. Somewhere in Belgium.²⁶

"Well, here is news from your boy once more and thanks to God its very good, as I'm perfectly well, happy and still all in one piece after going thru a good hard, tough drive and being personally in the middle of three hot battles. The closest call I had was a bullet burnt my cheek and got the man in back of me. Got mixed up in plenty of artillery shell fire and a little gas but none had any effect, as you see."

Clarence E. Burt, October 20, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"I am sitting in a dug out in the side of a hill, only a few days ago occupied by German officers. I am surgeon to the second batallion of the 121st Field Artillery....This is my home my dressing station and everything. The only other occupants of this underworld cage are the rats which are very friendly, for I awoke last night to find one curled up against my head, our other friends are the cooties or as the lumberjacks call them greybacks, they are body lice and our recreation each day consists in hunting for them and putting them on the stove to hear them pop....Cannot step outside the dug out without

²⁶ George Otis Oglesby (1891-1980) was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. During the war, he served as a mechanic in Co. G of the 362nd Infantry. He wrote the above quotation in a letter to his parents, George W. and Charlotte E. Oglesby. Two letters written by Oglesby are included in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection. DNDC*.

wearing helmet, carrying gas mask or Red Cross brassards. Our toilet is the whole of France, outside the door keep a shovel run out dig a hole cover it up, and get back again before a shell gets you."

Thomas Knowles, April 30, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"It is a beautiful day, and the artillary is quiet. Except for the occasional shot you wouldnt know there was a war on, but it is funny, if I were writing probably an hour from now I would say that it sounded like an inferno. That is just the way, quiet one minute, and a riot the next. From the German trenches comes the sound of a flute and an ocordion, and it sounds great. Hope the musicians dont get killed off. They play almost every night, and sometimes I feel curious to go over and see whats doing, but that <u>pleasure</u> is reserved for the infantry."

Fred McGill, May 20, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"Well Girlie we expect to be very busy soldiers in the next month or so as we expect to move to another front and I believe it will be a busy one you have heard that we dont get much sleep up near the front line...it is some sensation having those big shells singing over your head day and night and the first time gee what a job keeping your knees from knocking together but it dont take long to get over the first shock."

Harley Benedict, August 26, 1918. Somewhere in France.²⁷

"Boche bombing planes we call 'Old Jennys,' while anti-air-

32

²⁷ Harley M. Benedict (1894-1966) was born in Delaware, Ohio. During the war, he served with the 147th Field Hospital and 112th Sanitary Train. After the war, he returned to Delaware and worked as a jeweler. He wrote the above quotation in a letter to his mother. Harley and his brother Laurence's letters are in the *Harley and Laurence Benedict Correspondence, 1917-1919*.

craft guns are known as 'Big Berthas.' Sometimes they make it pretty warm around these parts. You know that 'what goes up, must come down' and that 'practise makes perfect,'— Well by now I am able to 'get out and get under' (the truck) in 'jest nothin flat.' Ha! It sure makes my blood boil to know some of the low-down tricks that those 'd- dutch' resort to. All sorts of traps are set for us by those retreating 'devils.' One has to be constantly on his guard or he is liable to become a victim. A man came into our hospital the other day that had been wounded when he thotlessly picked a pocket-book up that he had found in an old building. All sorts of things such as pocket-books, fountain pens, pencils, books, bales of hay, doors and etc are mined."

Richard Licht, November 6, 1918. Somewhere in France.²⁸

"When at the front a fellow came and told me the damnest storey you ever heard. He said that Wid Klopfer had been killed and that he saw him when he fell. Well you can emagine me. I felt awfully bad and could hardly eat my supper. The next morning who should I see but Wid comming down the road all smiles. Gee when I see that fellow again I'll kill him for that."

Harold Kamp, July 17, 1918. Château-Thierry, Villiers Sector, France.

"Troops are daily going in and out of the trenches. How small the numbers are when they return to the rear! The few shots that we heard today are those like a flame that is slowly extinguishing itself—it dies out then leaps into full brilliance,

²⁸ Richard Frederick Licht (1896-1947) was born in Geneva, New York. He served in the AEF as a wagoner in the 307th Machine Gun Battalion. After the war, he returned to Geneva where he worked as an insurance agent while also commanding Co. K of the New York State Guard. The quotation comes from a letter written to his sister, Elizabeth "Betty" Licht, in the *Richard Licht Letters*, 1918-1919. DNDC.

but only for a minute—the end must come. The war must end but these shots between the great battles only keep our minds alive to the fact that the world war after four bloody years is still with us."

Michael J. Smith, January 26, 1919. Kripp, Germany.²⁹

"One look at the scene where I was sitting the day I sent the card to Mother for my Christmas box would about drive one crazy. I was in the Argonne woods on what is called deadmans hill I could count 20 dead Germans without walking 20 feet some were killed from M. Gun fire others from Artillery & the same time those big coal buckets were going over my head sounding like a freight train."

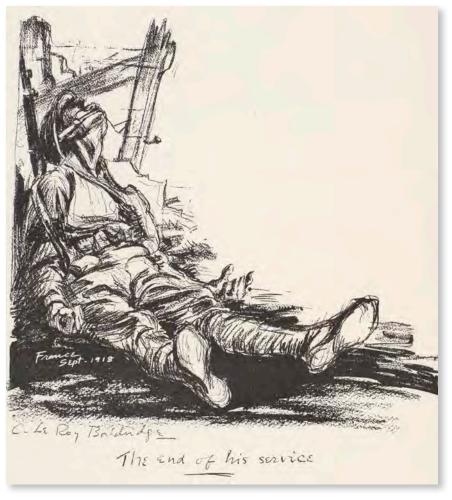
Walter Crane, October 6, 1918. Somewhere in France.³⁰

"The next morning we moved again, some two kilos and upon entering a woods were so terrifically bombarded that we were forced to retire against our will. That was the most terrible hour of the whole battle. Shells were landing everywhere, laying men right and left. [William Tecumseh] Sherman was right but after going through that horrible hour I have about decided that he knew nothing whatever about war. It was worse than Hell. Sherman did not have high explosive shells shot at him. He was not sniped at by 77's and larger. He did not have the great mined fields to cross that

²⁹ Michael Joseph Smith (1888-1969) was born in Alpena, Michigan. He served in Company D of the 151st Machine Gun Battalion. He wrote the above quotation in a letter to his younger sister living in Detroit, Beaugrand Smith. This letter is in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

³⁰ Walter A. Crane (ca. 1896-1978) attended McKinley High School in St. Louis, graduating in 1917. He served in the 138th Infantry during the war. While in the service, he wrote extensively to a former high school classmate, Ruth Backof. Crane's letters to Backof are in the *Walter Crane Papers*, 1917-1919, DNDC.

we crossed in that horrible hour, where one's own footfall might blow not only himself, but dozens of his comrades into eternity. I've seen whole squads and even more blown to pieces by one of them merely tripping over a low hidden wire. Yes, war is Hell."



"The end of his service." C. Leroy Baldridge, "I was there" with the Yanks on the western front, 1917-1919 (New York, 1919).

Stephen D. Brown, July 30, 1918. Somewhere in France.

"This last week we have had our share of mud and shells. following closely in the wake of a great advance. We have seen and felt the results of war. I was in one great church in a city 24 hours after German evacuation. Stories of stolen and slashed paintings, and wantonly destroyed interior architecture are not exaggerated. I saw them. The exteriors of most of the houses had escaped shell-fire, but we could see that they had made messes of the interiors, 'Military necessity,' I suppose. French civilians were back in the fields working on what had been in German possession, three days after their departure. Gathering crops (the Boche left in such a hurry that they hadn't time to take or destroy the stuff) before fixing up their houses! All over the roads, and thru the woods is equipment left behind, German and American. The American is left because the owner decides that it is unnecessary, when it must be carried. I have dropped a lot of junk. German equipment remains because the owner either left in too big a hurry, or did not leave at all. Our nasal organs easily detect the presence of the latter. There is nothing horrible in the sight of dead soldiers, even tho mutilated. I have felt only pity at the sight of French or Americans, and a grim 'its your own funeral' feeling for Germans."



Ruins of Verdun, France. Dorothy T. Arnold Collection.



End of the War and Going Home



On November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m. the fighting on the Western Front ceased. Germany had admitted defeat. The war was finished, but for many of the members of the AEF their service abroad was not over yet. On December 1, 1918, American troops crossed the German border into their zone of occupation on the Rhineland. Approximately 240,000 American soldiers served as occupation troops, but by the end of 1919 most troops had withdrawn, leaving only 20,000 officers and enlisted men behind. The last American soldiers left Ehrenbreitstein, Germany, on January 24, 1923.



"Audenarde Belgium Nov 11/1918."
C. Leroy Baldridge, "I was there" with the Yanks on the western front, 1917-1919 (New York, 1919).

Harold Kamp, November 11, 1918. Remoiville, France.

"During the morning the desultory fire continued. The Germans accepted the conditions of the armistice and at ten minutes past ten oclock the Germans ceased fire. At ten fifty-five the Allied guns went silent. Thus the World's War of 1914-1918 ended. It was a strange sight how happy everyone was. The stillness seemed like a dream. so uncanny and unreal. Ambulances were returning

empty, ammunition trains were stopped on the roads and told to return with their loads."

Arthur Clifford, December 12, 1918. Burgbrohl, Germany.³¹

"The Germans treated us with great courtesy to our faces at least, and in fact are far too fornicating to suit my fancy. But they are sure glad that the Americans and not the British or French are in this particular sector as they are afraid that they would take revenge for the stunts they have pulled off on them."

Thomas Knowles, December 25, 1918. Koblenz, Germany.

"I wonder if ever a more strange Christmas was ever spent than this one on the Rhine. Here we are an army of occupation in conquered territory, and the people we have whipped, still with their heads up, help us celebrate. The city of Coblenz last night gave all the officers in the Third Army headquarters, each a package, containing a hundred expensive cigaretts. In front of headquarters the engineers put up an imense Christmas tree, and last night it was illuminated by red, white, and blue lights. The band played this morning, and the square was crowded with Yanks and Germans. In the cathedral this morning the congregation was about half and half, and an American girl sang the solo. Truly there was 'Peace on Earth' today."

³¹ Arthur Clifford (1896-1986) was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut. During the war, he served as a Sergeant Major in the 6th Machine Gun Battalion, Marine Corps. After returning home, he joined the A. W. Burritt Company, a building materials firm. The quotation comes from a letter addressed to a Miss Katherine D. Hutton of Elyria, Ohio, in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

Laurence Benedict, November 23, 1918. Colombey-les-Belles, France.

"The censorship rules have been lifted and now we're allowed to speak freely of anything except what we think of the army, and France. Well, we couldn't tell that anyway, and do it right, in any existing language. I've made up my mind that next war I'll stay home and be drafted and be a hero, or else go to college and join the S.A.T.C. What would you do if you were at Colombey-Les-Belles and broke with orders to go up to your squadron? Neither do I, but I've got to do something damned quick and get out of here. Chances are I'll be back here in a few days on my way back to the States. You didn't vote dry, did you dad?"

W. M. Clark, January 26, 1919. Mayen, Germany.³²

"There is one thing that the people in the States did that the A.E.F. dose not like it looks like they took an advantage of our absents to fix things so that we will not even be able to get a glass of beer or wine when we get back to drink to one anothers health. Now is not that a crime? As Eddie Carter used to say before he was killed at Chateu Thierry on July 22."

Elmer K. Tanner, January 16, 1919. Mayschoss, Germany.³³

"The boys of the S.O.S. who never heard the noise of a big gun or the whiz of a german bullet are going home first and

³² While W. M. Clark's full identity remains a mystery, he served in Ambulance Company No. 5 in France. The quotation comes from a letter to Lila Sandall of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Clements has other letters written by various soldiers to Sandall in the *Lila Sandall Correspondence*, 1918-1919, DNDC.

³³ Elmer Karl Tanner (1893-1964) was born in Ohio. He served as a private in the 117th Engineer Regiment. The quotation appears in a letter to his younger sister, Florence Woodward of Geneva, Ohio, in the Clements's *World War One Letters and Documents Collection, DNDC*.

spreading a lot of hot air about the hard times they have had over here. They ought to lay in a shell hole all night in the rain and cold and then they can talk but wait until we get back we will call there bluff and knock them for a goal."

Thomas Knowles, March 10, 1919. Camp Devens, Massachusetts.

"We pulled into Boston on the battleship Nebraska at eight this morning, after a pretty rough voyage of thirteen days. We took a circuous route, passing south of the Azores, but we did not seem to able to dodge the bad weather. I was sick as the dickens for two days, and the rest of the voyage wasnt any picnic. You have probably seen photographs of war-vessels in rough seas. They are certainly not built for comfort. But anyway dont think I am growling, for I would have been quite content to cross in a row-boat, any way to get home."

Laurence Benedict, January 26, 1919. New York City, New York.

"And Believe Me—I'm damned glad to get back among intelligent people who, wash behind their ears."



"Greetings: I'm in the Good Old U.S.A." Howard Barnum WWI Album.

Selection of 101 Collections of World War I Manuscripts and Visual Materials at the William L. Clements Library

- 1. American Red Cross, 91st Division Death Reports, 1917-1931*
- 2. Appleyard, Ernest Papers, 1916-1919
- 3. Arnold, Dorothy T. Collection, 1904-1932
- 4. Banker, Grace D. Collection, 1918
- 5. Barnes, Jean C. Letters, 1918
- 6. Barr, John Letters, 1918
- 7. Bates, Esther A. Collection, 1917-1919
- 8. Bauder, Carl Letters, 1918
- 9. Benedict, Harley and Laurence Correspondence, 1917-1919
- 10. Blumenthal, H. W. Diary, 1918
- 11. Brokenshire, John Roy Letters, 1917
- 12. Bromet, Julius Papers, 1917-1919
- 13. Brown, Stephen D. Diaries, 1917-1919
- 14. Buchanan, Frank S. Collection, 1918-1919
- 15. Burt, Clarence E. Papers, 1918
- 16. Camp Devens (Mass.) Letters, 1917-1918
- 17. Camp Hancock Letters, 1917
- 18. Carpenter, Stanley D. Correspondence, 1917-1918
- 19. Carson, Joseph Papers, 1917-1919
- 20. Chase, Charles W., Jr. and Harriet P. Papers, 1911-1939
- 21. Chase, George M. Collection, 1914-1918
- 22. Conroy, Edwin F. Scrapbook, 1918-1921
- 23. Cottrell-Jury Correspondence, 1917-1918
- 24. Crane, Walter Papers, 1917-1919*
- 25. Crouse, Randal Papers, 1908-1919
- 26. Cummings, Charles K. Voyages in the U.S.S. *Mount Vernon*, 1921
- 27. Daugherty, Willis V. Letters, 1917-1920
- 28. Eckloff, Bernard Postcards, 1918-1919
- 29. Eve, Joseph Diary, 1916-1919*
- 30. Fierke, Edwin W. Family Collection, bulk 1917-1919
- 31. Ford, John E. Letters, 1917-1919
- 32. Foster, Charles H. Collection, 1898-1967
- 33. Furman, Benjamin A. Collection, 1917-1919*

- 34. Geiger Family Papers, 1890-1939
- 35. Harles, Victor Papers, 1916-1919
- 36. Harris, John H. Diary, 1918-1919*
- 37. Heinrich Family Photograph Collection, 1895, 1910-1986
- 38. Henderson, Walter D. Collection, 1917-1951
- 39. Heyboer, Marinus Letters, 1918
- 40. Hill, Edmund Collection, 1918-1919
- 41. Hobson, Earl H. Papers, 1918-1919*
- 42. Hoffa, Alvin Letters, 1918-1919*
- 43. Holcomb, Earl Letters, 1917-1919
- 44. Johnson, Reginald Letters, 1917-1920
- 45. Jonas, Frank D. Letters, 1918-1919
- 46. Kamp, Harold Journal, 1917-1919*
- 47. Kennel, Joseph Letters, 1919
- 48. Kenny, Michael B. Collection, 1919
- 49. Kilmer, Joyce "Trees" Collection, 1913-[after 1922]*
- 50. Kiningham, Warner E. Papers, 1918-1919*
- 51. Klee, Edwina Collection, 1914-1923
- 52. Knowles, Thomas Collection, 1917-1919*
- 53. Lacy, Lewis Papers, 1917-1919
- 54. Langnecker, Harry L. Letters, 1918
- 55. Latto, Harry Letters, 1917-1919
- 56. Laurent, Stewart Frederick Papers, 1907-1947
- 57. Licht, Richard Letters, 1918-1919*
- 58. Linton, Herbert Letters, 1918-1919
- 59. Littlefield, Brewster E. Collection, 1917-1941*
- 60. Lodge, Henry Cabot, "The Coming Treaty of Peace," 1918*
- 61. MacArthur, Douglas Collection, 1885-1983*
- 62. MacLennan, Arthur Collection, 1917-1918*
- 63. Madry, Amis A. Letters, 1918
- 64. Maher, Leo Letters, 1918-1919
- 65. Maxwell, Louise Correspondence, 1917-1919
- 66. McGill, Frederick Collection, 1917-1919*
- 67. Miller, Charles Letters, 1918-1919
- 68. Mitchell, Joseph Correspondence, 1912-1919
- 69. Mixter, William Jason and Dorothy Papers, 1915-1920*
- 70. Nutter, Eulalia R. Collection, 1917-1920
- 71. Oliver, Edward P. and Homer J. Letters, 1915-1918
- 72. Parker, Clinton W. Papers, 1917-1919*

- 73. Paul, Morris Collection, 1917-1919
- 74. Perry, Noah F. Letters, 1918
- 75. Pollock, Frank and Glenn Letters, 1917-1919
- 76. Rogers, Rochester H. and Lois S. Collection, 1913-1923
- 77. Rothenhoefer, Walter Letters, 1918-1919*
- 78. Sandall, Lila Correspondence, 1918-1919*
- 79. Schaller, Alfred Letters, 1917-1919
- 80. Scroggs, Clifford H. Collection, 1917-1919
- 81. Selleck, Melville Letters, 1917-1920
- 82. Shaw Family Collection, 1905-1925
- 83. Shaw, Winifred B. Correspondence, 1916-1918
- 84. Snap Shots, Camp Funston, Kansas, and Camp Lee, Virginia, 1917-1919
- 85. Snook, Thomas E. Letters, 1916-1919
- 86. St. Germain, Albert E. Collection, 1894-1964
- 87. Stevens Family Papers, 1884-1929
- 88. Sturgeon, James Leonard Collection, 1900-1967
- 89. Thomas, Erwin Collection, 1917-1919
- 90. Tufts-Days Papers, 1915-1920
- 91. Van Buskirk, George Letters, 1917-1919
- 92. Van Winkle, Edward Collection, 1917-1919*
- 93. Watt, Aulder Correspondence, 1917
- 94. Wherley, Clarence V. Letters, 1918-1919
- 95. Whiteman, Roy M. Letters, 1918-1919
- 96. Whitfield-Barnett Correspondence, 1917-1921
- 97. Whitney, Bert C. Diary, 1918-1919
- 98. Williams, Alice and Hazel Correspondence, 1917-1919*
- 99. World War I Letters and Documents Collection, 1903-1921*
- 100. World War I Surgeon's Album,

Base Hospital 29, 1918-1919

101. Young, Joseph LaVille Collection, 1858-1947

* These materials are part of the Duane Norman Diedrich Collection (DNDC).



909 South University Avenue Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1190 (734) 764-2347

© 2018 Regents of the University of Michigan Regents of the University of Michigan:

Regents of the University of Michigan:
Michael J. Behm, Mark J. Bernstein, Shauna Ryder Diggs,
Denise Ilitch, Andrea Fischer Newman,
Andrew C. Richner, Ron Weiser, Katherine E. White,
Mark S. Schlissel, ex officio.