

MINOT MAN WRITES
FROM FRANCE

Walter Champlin, University Student,
Tells of Thrilling Scenes Just Behind the Lines—Says We Don't Realize What the War Means.

The following very interesting letter was received by Mrs. P. J. McKone from her brother, Walter Champlin, of this city, who went to France with two units of university students, comprising 42 men, to serve in the Ambulance Corps:

In Camp, June 20.

Dear Maude:

No doubt you have been expecting some word from me other than the brief post-cards I have sent from time to time, so I'll have to explain why you have been neglected. My time here in the American Field Service is not my own and as a consequence I have very little leisure. Our trip was uneventful as you perhaps already know from my letters home, which I have asked to be sent to you as soon as they have read them.

Reaching the Ambulance Headquarters we found that although there were numbers of Ford chassis available no bodies could be secured in France; due to the lack of labor and material in Paris. In addition to that many of the Ambulance Sections were "en repos," that is in sections where there was no fighting, as there are many such now. So, instead of waiting around Paris for a couple of months for bodies and locations at the front we decided to go into the Camion Service, just then being inaugurated by the young Americans in France, and that is what I am doing now. We spent about two days in Paris and then were sent out to a training camp for ten days to familiarize ourselves with the big trucks that are used in the transport of munitions and "materiel des guerre." We have been out here at the front about five days and although the work is very hard, it is most interesting. The first night we were here some Bosch planes came over the lines scouting after dark and the French anti-aircraft 5's opened up on them and there was the most beautiful exhibition of fireworks I have ever seen. They follow the planes with gigantic searchlights—and at one time there were as many as 20 great streaks of light across the sky, to say nothing of the many signal bombs and rockets. This happens on every clear night. Wish that I could tell you where we are located but it is not allowed — "defender," as the French say, and the censor would mark it out. They are very strict.

The nice thing about this service is that we did not have to split up into groups but will be maintained in a single corps throughout our period of service. The grub we get is very plain but always tastes good after one has been driving all day. For breakfast we get coffee, coarse French bread and jam; for lunch and dinner usually a soup or stew, wine, meat and cheese. We have to drink the pinard, or wine, in place of water, as the latter is not fit. I am getting so I can drink the stuff quite readily although very sour.

Today we were out to a battery of 5's with a bunch of ammunition and were there at the time they were cannonading the German trenches. You must remember that the batteries are about 2 1-2 miles back of the lines and the gunner never sees his targets. The guns are all concealed under ground and are hard to find. The officers allowed us in the pits and let us fire the pieces after they were aimed. Also remember that the caps are removed from the shells when being transported. At the same time we were watching the guns a couple of aeroplanes were having a duel a couple of miles up in the air, so on the whole we had an interesting day.

The more I see of this war the more I detest the whole thing. Hope that the U. S. may be the power that brings it to a speedy conclusion. To you in the calm and peaceful America it is impossible to explain the feeling one has on viewing the results of the struggle. You cannot imagine it. So far I have not seen a drop of blood shed, but yet have been impressed that my whole view-point has been changed. There will be 42 (the whole corps) Pacifists return to the states when their six months is up.

When you see once peaceful and beautiful villages totally demolished, trees completely stripped of foliage, all the natural and useful pursuits of the country stopped, with the exception of the few very old men and women and children who work in the fields, huge trains of munitions going to the trenches, long lines of troops marching to the front to replace the tired and worn-out men coming out for a breathing time—all the Glory, Pomp and Music that the ordinary American attaches to war gone—then you begin thinking and the Divine Being alone can dictate your conclusions. Would that I had a more powerful pen to bring home to you in America the terrible burden of war. The French have fought for three long years, bravely and well—perhaps more nobly than any people on earth—and now our time has come. The sooner the U. S. army comes the sooner the war will be over. I hate to see them come, in one way, to die on foreign fields—but the cause is just, the French nation worthy—and "it's up to us!"

Oh yes, there is one thing before I close. Will you have the good old "bog-jumper" (Pete) some day when he is over town purchase for me a few packages of pipe tobacco—Edgeworth, Prince Albert or Imperial Cube Cut—and mail them to me. Better split it into two or three small packages and mail them a week apart so if one goes astray or is sunk, I shall be sure of getting some anyway. This French tobacco is so infernally strong that I am thinking of lining my mouth with asbestos for defense.

So far, June 20th, I have not had a single word from home. Guess the mail packet was submarined.

Sincerely,
WALTER BUDD.

My address now is:
W. B. Champlin
T. M. U. 23
Convois Automobiles,
Paris, France

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We're not urging you in so much to buy, but to look. Then, when you get ready to buy, we hope your visit here will have convinced you that this is the store for your clothes, headware, footwear and furnishings.

We may not win every man's trade. We could hardly expect to, although we'd like to. But we want every man from his own personal observation to see how well we can fill his needs, both from the standpoint of goods and price.

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Here's a line that for over a third of a century has stood out as one of the three best in America—Sincerity Clothes. You get quality, fit and good wear at prices that spell big value.

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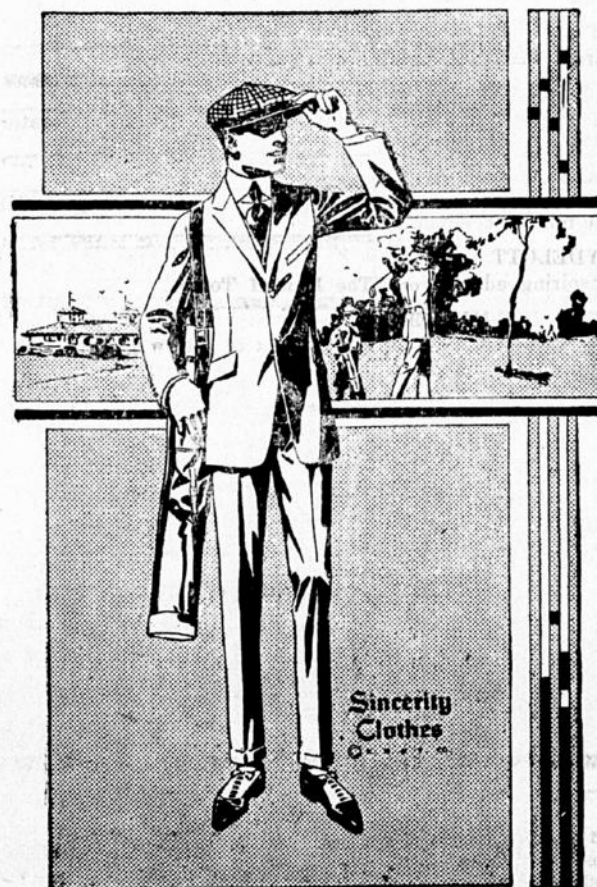
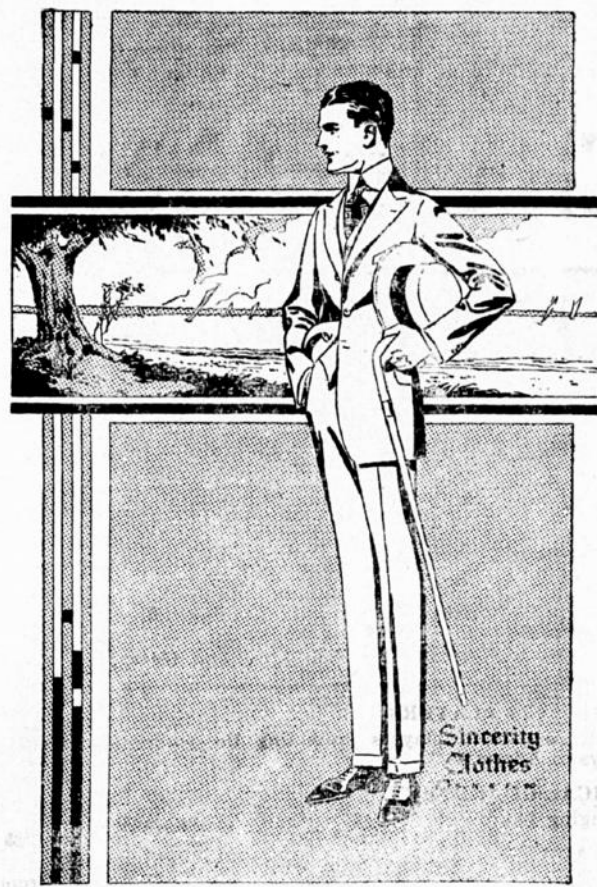
You're just as well taken care of here in hats and caps as in clothes. We've worked hard and long and late to get just what you like in style and quality. And you'll agree with us that here are the values.

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And in furnishings, too, you'll find here just what you want and at the prices you'll like to pay. We find that value-giving, in the end, is our gain, because value-getting pleases our customers. And we're here to satisfy and please.

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