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Ward County Soldier Writes Good Descriptive Letter.

The Independent is pleased to run an interesting letter from Duane Holmes, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Holmes, from north of the city. The letter is of some length, but very good. We are running the first installment this week, which gives a history of the young soldier's experiences, until he lands in France. The next installment will follow next week:

In Camp near Ligny, France, November 24th, 1918.

Dear Dad:
Well, Dad, get all your chores done up and come in alongside the fire and I'll try and spin you a little yarn about your son's brother's experiences in this world war. I'm going to lay a few facts before you at first. At school during the last two years I was known as a supporter of universal military training. I didn't cut much of a sweep except in my classes. An underclass man doesn't cut much ice as a rule, and I was too busy scraping a living out of the world in addition to going to school. Somehow, I nearly lost heart the last semester of '17. Something had to happen. I hadn't made any plans for the coming summer's work. From February on I figured on war. I knew it was inevitable and I thought I would be able to get into an officers' training camp and get a commission. I never tried. Slow to get aroused it took little time for me to enlist when the fever struck me. And my name is among the first hundred of those who left the "U" to enlist. I was not called by patriotic sentiments to enlist. Only I couldn't stay behind with all the other fellows going. I had no reason not to enlist. Well, I enlisted. I had dreams of being an officer within a few months. You know how I went thru Mare Island and I've told you how much I enjoyed my stay there. One day while there, a newspaper item told of a regiment of Marines that would be among the first to go to France. I had read lots about the war. I knew that the war Sherman labeled was not half so intense as the war the ones who went to France were to face. I sort of treated myself to the thought that I would not be among the Marines to go. But I don't care who the man is, place him in a camp and train him in the arts of war and in a month or six weeks he'll be looking forward to the time when he leaves for action. So when the order came for my section to be ready to leave for the east on June 20th, we were finishing our work on the range. We were ready to go.

Lowell remained there as an acting corporal and I bid him good bye as I marched toward the ferry. It took some time to reach the other side of the bay where we were put on board a S. P. train. Two good friends shared with me a seat. They came across in the same company and one of them I know to have made the great sacrifice. It took six days for us to go from the edge of Frisco Bay to the banks of the Potomac river. A variety of country passed under our eyes. The first night out was cool and pleasant, but after we left Los Angeles it became nearly red hot. One could see the heat rolling across the Salton sea and it seemed to break on the mountains in the distance. Yuma was passed in the second night and that second day was remarkable for heat. How the innumerable rabbits can live under that boiling heat is a mystery to me. El Paso on the Rio Grande welcomed us one night and when the bugle blew assembly rather than leave a dish of ice cream to melt unused I dashed it in among some bananas in a paper sack. I never ate it! Some say that Texas is large. I'll never dispute a man when he makes a proposition like that. It took us about 36 hours to leave it behind. We went thru Fort Worth and Dallas during the night and morning found us nearing the state of Arkansas. My previous impressions were that Arkansas was the home of razor backed hogs and long haired fiddlers, but the rain which fell while we rested at Texarkana washed that utterly wrong impression away. And that day we saw the smiling green fields and patches of trees of Arkansas. Little Rock is not as little as one would think. And as a city it is some pebble. It had a washed-clean look when I saw it. Before night was entirely come we crossed the gigantic Mississippi and reached Memphis. And I might say I'm glad it was quite dark for as it was all I saw was colored folks and I was glad to get on our way to Nashville. Next day Chattanooga and Lookout Mountain were passed. It was a rough country to fight in. A trifle worse than any I've seen in France. But Tennessee was really beautiful, with its verdant hills and placid rivers. The weather was much cooler than that of Texas and that helped. One thing that sort of disappointed me was that we did not go down the famous valley where Sheridan rode his great ride. We turned off at Lynchburg and made our way over the hills to Richmond, Va. A short stop and we went on to Fredericksburg, and then we heard we were nearing Quantico, our point of debarkation. They say it's some place now. But a little matter of seventeen months ago it was not so inviting. We were herded off the train and company commanders and top sergeants were there to get their quota of recruits. Recruits? Rookies! Chance threw me with the group chosen by the 20th company. Big Miller was acting top sergeant and a Miller was captain. They assigned us to tents after we were divided into platoons and we marched by and drew our cots, mosquito nettings and mattresses. I asked the top as he went by, "Are you going to issue sheets and pillow cases tonight?" "Sheets, Hell, no! You're in the Army now!" And since that I've never draped my evening soul in sheets or rested my weary head on a snowy pillow while in my allotted bunk in camp. And I can count the nights otherwise spent! However, there was no time to pine. I hit the blankets and had a fine sleep after I'd treated myself to a Potomac bath.

The next month was full of work and pleasure. After the Fourth of July, which was spent in Washington, D. C., we settled down to regular work. The second day out drilling I had my chance. I was given a squad to take care of. And I was the first recruit to become an Acting Jack. It gave some help as I could eat with the N. C. O.'s. We were listed at one time as the Overseas Battalion so we knew here we were going. We spent our time in varied ways. And all the forenoons were spent with full pack and the sun spoke the July language. In the afternoon we usually worked on a model trench system and 'twas then that a short rest under the trees felt good. I made three trips to Washington and had some good sight-seeing trips. We only had a few weeks left to stay when we moved into barracks. Then we stowed our mess kits and like humans once more.

The morning of July 21st found us ready to get aboard the train that took us on our way toward a port of embarkation. We did not know what

it was to be then.

Government reports remark that July 31st was one of the hottest on record. And it told on us as we rode thru Washington, D. C., Baltimore and Wilmington, Del., toward Philadelphia. We landed and headed right for our ship and marched aboard the U. S. S. Henderson. Our company drew a space on the berth deck, one deck down from main, in a compartment ship, wide and well forward. Well, one thing about being on board ship is that everything is close at hand. Chow was served on tables let down from the ceiling and that night—the hottest one in the year—I sweated under a ventilator in a sea-going hammock. I made it O. K. but a few fellows had a falling out with theirs—and steel decks show no favors. Lowell was there and looked me up right away so we had a visit. We were booked out that night but did not go. We hung around there on the pier for four days. Saturday, the 4th, we were paid and some of us were on pass for that evening. Lowell and I had three evenings together and that Saturday night we spent together in Philadelphia. I made an early rise to get back on board ship on time. I had to take a taxi but was checked in C. & S. about fifteen minutes before leaving. Well, news was stirring. We were leaving. All the extra chasers were cast off, everything was made ship shape. Lowell appeared and gave me a pair of trousers and I helped him out on the matter of going home on furlough. About 12:15 we were helped out into the river by tugs and we started on our voyage to France. Gunnery Sergeant Flynn (since posthumously decorated for bravery at Belleau Wood on June 6th) had given me a place on his gun crew. I was trainer and that meant I had to regulate the elevation of the cannon and press the firing button. It was quite a large at first—doing four hours on and twelve off—but before two weeks were up it was quite monotonous to have to cast off from the hammock at twelve or four in the morning. The lunch served for the men of the mid-watch (12 to 4 a. m.) made matters a little better. We did not go far that Sunday afternoon but cast anchor about four bells and lay to until eight bells on the morning watch. I had looked upon the rolling majesty of the Pacific but until now I'd never seen the Atlantic. Down river we steamed; the pilot left us at the river mouth and we left the Delaware just as the sun was sinking behind a shoal of western clouds. The ocean looked bleak and lonesome. And we went to bed in the dark. Off to the port side we could see the lights of Atlantic City. We were at sea, our gun watch was waked at 3:30 and that let us see the formalities as a destroyer spoke us and led us within the net. We went in past many craft and cast anchor off Tompkinsville (Some say so.) When the fog had vanished we could see the smiling face of the Statue of Liberty. All day the ferries plied their trade between Jersey and Staten Island. In the afternoon some lordly transports stood out to sea. Part of our convoy—was noised among us. So it proved to be. The Finland—since torpedoed but saved and repaired—the Antilles—since torpedoed and sunk, and a couple of others I cannot name—oh, yes, the San Joaquin and one more.

At eight bells the second evening's watch we weighed anchor. Already the harbor was darkening. Dusk hid the Statue of Liberty. We were under way.

The mid-watch caught us that night and we were alone at sea. Morning found us in the midst of our convoy. Five transports, one cruiser and three destroyers made up our party.

The day's routine on the way across was quite strict. Hammocks stowed away by six a. m. and swung out before seven-thirty in the evening. Inspection at nine-thirty every day and drill and signal work. Three squares a day was my portion; but after getting an anti typhus inoculation on our first Sunday out I was pretty sick. Monday evening found me feeling pretty bad and when I came off the morning watch the top sergeant told me I had to get a squad in shape to drill in the field next morning. I did, but my squad didn't get a look-in. But one of the fellows and I

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evened up when we took the money in the individual drill down. There was some kick because I was a corporal but there was nothing to keep me from taking part.

The next week was the same old story. The second Sunday we had a good sub scare and Monday morning we had a fight in earnest. It was a lively hour while the fight lasted and all I saw was the wake of a torpedo. But all our armament was working. Even airplanes were out helping us. During the battle the coast of France loomed up and it was the most welcome sight I'd seen on that voyage. About 10:30 we were within the net and off came our life preservers worn and off came the mouth of the Loire river. Later in the evening we were towed into the unloading basin. No shore leave that night. But we were safe in France—brave France!

AMERICAN FLAG PULLED DOWN TO MAKE PLACE FOR EMBLEM OF REDS

Two Russians of McHenry County Are Held on a Serious Charge.

Max Sitch, a farmer, and William Engoroi, a farm laborer, both residing near Kief, McHenry county, are in the Ward county jail at Minot in default of \$3,000 bonds each charged with "intent to incite and engage resistance to the United States, and willfully displaying the flag called the Bolsheviki," to await trial at the Minot term of federal court.

The arrests were made by P. H. Bowler, Fargo, deputy United States marshal.

Both men are natives of Russia and unmarried.

The red flag which the two men are alleged to have displayed at Kief has been in the hands of Col. M. A. Hildreth, United States district attorney, since last Monday when the warrants for their arrest were issued. The flag bears the inscription, "Out with war and militarism. We ought to have peace. Hello Bolsheviki."

Net the Only Flag.

The flag now in the hands of the district attorney in Fargo is not the only red flag the two defendants have made and displayed, according to Marshal Bowler, who returned to Fargo last night. He said that reaching school house near Kief. In the former the two men hoisted a red flag at Dogden, McLean county, and on a country school house near Kief. In the former instance, Marshal Bowler was told, they lowered the American flag to put the red emblem in place. Feeling against Sitch and Engoroi at Kief is high.

Fred Groninger, well known farmer from Burlington, transacted business in the city Monday.

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