

HAROLD FOOTE TELLS OF HIS EXPERIENCES

Interesting Account of Trip to and Life in France—With the 116th Engineers.

Mrs. S. B. Foote of Middleton has very kindly permitted The Tribune to publish the following letter from her son, Harold, who is with the 116th Engineers. The letter is an interesting account of the trip to France and of army life there. It follows:

Angers, France, Nov. 24, 1918. Dear Mother and Dad: As you have been designated as the day for everyone to write to Dad, or someone else, and also one can now tell what we have done and also what we are now doing, thought I'd drop you a few lines and give a brief story of our sojourn in France.

I haven't had time to write to you, but I had to write to my brother and sister for today, for "Dad's" letter. I probably go through in very good time. Friday I received four letters written the latter part of October, and yesterday a letter from Joy written November 1, and a Thanksgiving card from a girl I met in N. Carolina which was mailed there November 6, 1918. Also received some of the home papers Joy sent and a whole armful of Statesman's yesterday. Haven't read all of them yet, but will soon. Thanks ever so much for them.

We left Camp Mills at 3 a. m. the 26th of November, as you see nearly one year ago; yet but it was cold that morning, but with overcoat and packs we managed to keep warm. We marched to the train, rode on it until daylight, then crossed the river on a ferry boat, and about 9 a. m. boarded the "Tenadores." Was good and warm on the ship all the time. There were about 2000 crew and all on the ship. We sailed around the harbor in the evening and got under way about midnight. There were six or seven ships in the convoy. The first battalion were on the "Mallory" in the same fleet. We had one battleship and one destroyer (sub)—all the way with us, until the last three or four days, when one p. m. the sea was swarming with little sub chasers and they took us on through.

As I have said before, I didn't get seasick, good many were for a few days and some were all the way across. Had turkey and cranberry sauce for Thanksgiving dinner on the ship. Nearly everybody tried to eat dinner, and it was a good one too—the turkey and cranberries were extras—but as it was our third day on ship quite a number weren't feeling like eating, but nearly every one tried to eat at least some turkey, and hadn't any more than got started eating until a storm came up and there was some pretty good sized waves, the tables, dishes, food, etc. all fell off from one side of the ship to the other. I held my plate in one hand and held onto a post with the other and would eat between waves, and I didn't think I didn't lose any of my dinner either from my plate or later to the fish. After dinner I went up on deck and watched the big waves. Was my first sight of the mountains at sea. I didn't think they could be any larger, but some of the fellows who had been there before said that sometimes they got larger.

I enjoyed to stand on an upper deck and watch the stern go away down while the bow away up in the air, then vice versa, would look like it was going clear out of sight, but it never quite went out of sight and always came back up.

Every once in a while a wave would come up over the side of the boat on the lower deck and was lots of fun to watch some fellow walking along and all of a sudden see him get a good ducking.

At night everything on the outside was as dark as dark could be, when you were out on deck one couldn't as a rule see your hand in front of you, and all you could see was the continual swishing of the waves upon the boat. We zigzagged around an awful lot, and it is hard telling where we went. Part of the time it was real warm outside. Guess we were in the Gulf stream then. On the 10th of December we came in sight of land before noon and when we got a little closer well I tell you it looked mighty good. That evening we pulled into dock at St. Nazaire—being 14 days of the sea, but it was three days later before we got off the "Tenadores." Didn't see any "subs" coming over.

When we got off the ship we marched out to the American constructed barracks and stayed there for four or five days. While there most of our men were taken away and sent to the 1st and 2nd engineers. We were the last of our division to come overland as our division was the 5th division over here. We found out we were to be the replacement division.

We left St. Nazaire a couple of days after the greater part of our men had left for the 1st and 2nd Engineers. We got into French box cars, which were said to be the 32 home-8 Chevrolets. They were small cars to what we are used to seeing at home. The passenger cars are also small, and

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most of the engines also. The box cars had wooden benches in them, and the joints of the floor were large cracks in the floor. Traveled thus for 36 hours when we arrived at La Courtine, a small place just west of Lyons a ways. It was in the mountainous section. Stayed there until about the middle of January. Had a dandy place to stay while there as we were in large barracks. Had a dandy good Christmas and New Year's dinner there. Received our first mail there on New Year's day. Got our first pay there, then we went down town and I still remember my first French meal. Were the first American soldiers there but it wasn't long until they learned to serve more in the American way. Could get plenty of eggs, potatoes and meat, etc. of course no pastries.

Left La Courtine the middle of January and went to Sell-Sur-Cher, which was north from there and about 200 miles due south of Paris on the Cher river. Sent out two details of men to the 1st Corp. school and 2nd Corp. school, which took what few privates we had left and a lot of corporals and sergeants. They are still there, with exceptions of a few who went to hospitals and so came back through our camp here as we get all of them through here.

Went in box cars to Sell-Sur-Cher, but was warmer than our former trip. When we arrived there, which was about a 24 hour trip, it was almost like spring. Rained a little, but grass was green and most of the time roads were dry. Gee, but it was pretty around there. The town was much larger and the roads leading out into the country were grand, so large and smooth, with large trees on each side. Had quarters in some old buildings, but as it wasn't cold had it fairly nice. Were the first ones there also, but a few days later lots of other outfits came in. It was there that I saw Ted Driscoll and a lot of other fellows that I knew from the 2nd Idaho. Commenced to learn a few words of French there and got so I could order up a meal, and got some of the best meals there I ever found in France.

In that part of the country nearly everything was grape vineyards and they surely looked nice. Some of our men who were left in the states at the hospitals joined us there. We also got a few more men assigned to us just before we left there. We left Sell-Sur-Cher the 17th of February and came here this time in coaches, and only a few hours ride here to Angers. And we had been here since the 6th of February. How much longer we will be here—well I don't know.

We received all the engineer casualties from the states here and gave them their final training and then they were shipped out to different Engineer outfits at the front. After the men came back from hospitals they also came here and then sent to their outfits from here. So we got to see a number of our old men, and quite a number stayed here with us. Worked up a big organization here and what I mean we have handled an awful lot of men here since last February and still are.

I went up to the 1st Corp. school at Goudrecourt, a short ways from Toul the latter part of March. Stayed there a month. Saw most of the Middleton boys as they were sent there on the detail from La Courtine. Frank Shaffer is here now and is doing M. P. duty down town. There was too much work for the room we had here at this barracks so we have three in this town, so don't get to see some of the boys very often. While at Goudrecourt—was there as a student learning some of the engineering work—was about 30 kilometers from the front and could hear the roar of the big guns at the front nearly every day. Was just a few kilometers from where Joan of Arc was born and called at Domdremy. Wanted to go over and visit the place where there had stayed every time I had a chance to go, consequently didn't get to see it. The boys that were there on detail told me all about it. Can see where she was born, also the church she worshipped in.

The 1st of June I went up towards the front with some replacements for the 2nd Engineers. Went to Meaux which is a town the other side (east) of Paris on the Marne river. That was as far as you could go on the railroad at that time. From there we went in trucks with the 2nd Engineers headquarters between 30 and 40 kilometers east of Meaux. It was a very exciting there then and that was the only change I had to see any of the front at all. I was just there a while and didn't get to see any of the

CALDWELL MEN ARE RELEASED FROM NAVY

Renewal of Hostilities Only Thing Likely to Take Them Back—Enjoyed Experiences.

The Caldwell boys who have returned from the naval training station near Seattle are released from the navy. They do not expect to go back unless hostilities are renewed. The boys express themselves as having a beneficial and highly enjoyable experience.

They were given a course of instruction in navigation and mathematics, seamanship. They were also drilled every day.

The men who were released are Edgar and R. W. Oakes, Jr., Derald Caldwell, Will Welsh, Harry Burger, Willis Spencer, Wm. McClusky and Hogart Lawrence. Wayne Merrick is home but has not been released. He expects his release at an early date.

"Before the armistice was signed all of us were satisfied and willing to go on," said Mr. R. W. Oakes, Jr., "but when the war came to an end we all became impatient to get home. While the training was good, and the experience pleasant in every respect, very few men who were in naval training will turn to the navy. The freedom and opportunity outside has an appeal for every American man that cannot be overcome. I believe that comparatively few of the men will enlist in the navy voluntarily."

But saw a German aeroplane drive away a sausage balloon which was up on the front line for observation purposes. Immediately six French aeroplanes took in after the Boche plane but whether they ever got it or not I don't know. Was only about a mile from where Claude, Herley and those fellows were but did not know it until later.

On the way back stopped in Paris for four days and got to see quite a good many places of interest, although there are many places I would like to visit yet. Haven't had a furlough as yet. Put in to go to England but it was turned down and then it was too late to go south, so I have been waiting to see if I couldn't go to some place besides where we go from this point now. Think by next month I can go to Nice or some of those places so if I can will take the trip. That is if we aren't set to the states by that time and I hardly think we will. The men who have something wrong with them will probably leave here very soon for the states. It has been raining all day today.

Am feeling fine and dandy and hope this finds all of you the same. It won't be such a great while now until we will probably be back in civies again.

Here's hoping all of you have a Merry Xmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Love to all,
SGT. HAROLD E. FOOTE.

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De Laval Service Day

Tuesday, January 7, 1919

A Special Representative of the DeLaval Dairy Supply Co. will be at the office of the IDAHO IMPLEMENT COMPANY, in CALDWELL, Tuesday, January 7th, 1919, for the purpose of giving free service on any De Laval Cream Separator which may need attention.

Bring in your separator on that day, or come and see the "De Laval man" and let him give you the benefit of his experience in remedying any troubles—real or imaginary.

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Parma Tuesday afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Starkey of Boise have been visiting for the past few days with Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Gulliksen.

Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Judd and Maurice of Big Bend and Mrs. M. M. Small of Parma spent Christmas day at the L. E. Small home.

Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Babcock took Xmas dinner at the G. G. Penson home.

Robert Spaeth is able to be about again after an attack of the flu.

children have returned from a short visit at Buhl.

A. E. Dunn and Barney Dunn were Nampa visitors Sunday.

Miss Lorraine Brooks of Caldwell was a visitor at the H. I. McLaughlin home a couple of days last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Gulliksen, Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Starkey and Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Small and family were Big Bend visitors Friday.

During this time of quarantine the chairman of the sewing committee begs that women make a special effort to come to the rooms on Wednesdays and Fridays for work that can be taken home. Headquarters is urging the need of haste with refugee garments as they must be sent before long to do any good this winter. The government is asking that more pajamas and convalescent robes be made for our wounded soldiers in the hospitals. Can you not game and help.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Havre, a daughter, December 29.

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