

WITH THE COLORS.

Y.M.C.A.

June 10, 1918.

Dearest Parents:-

My letter written on the boat did not get away until about today or later so you will be getting letters pretty close together. I do not know how long it takes for mail these days, but I imagine it takes quite a bit longer than formerly.

We landed soon after I wrote my last letter, last Saturday to be exact, although we got safely into the harbor before dark Friday. The last few miles was quite fine. We had seen some beautiful scenery during the day, and some interesting submarine defense. The destroyers and trawlers darting hither and thither, above us the dirigibles, floated and scouted, and in the distance white light houses, and little white towns against a green back-ground. But as I say the last few miles we(re) fine. The convoy had kept together until then, but the last five miles, up to the point where the pilot boards us was mine swept so all boats raced for it. It was great to see our ship pass the ship in front of us and all the others, many well known liners and slip into the place where we could get the pilot first and so dock first. So we led the fleet up to the docks. Then, during the race, we knew for the first time how lucky we had been in being on the fasted ship, for some had preferred a liner to freighter. We stayed all night aboard.

I forgot to say that the men & officers were carried away with the scenery near the harbor. I had seen much finer harbors here in England but did not say so.

The next morning we got our baggage off as quickly as possible and then marched five miles to camp. As the men had about 60 lbs to carry it was quite a pull for them after being couped twelve days on the boat without exercise. Col. Cox and his staff led the way, the band came next and then the entire regiment. We went through the poorer quarters of the city. Two things impressed me. 1st the great number of children. 2nd the great number of women, many quite young, with babies in their arms - could not held thinking how their husbands and fathers were in France. Saw many wounded soldiers too.

We did not stay there but a day, and on Sunday came to this place. Passed through some beautiful parts of England. The officers were carried away by the scenes around my old residence. We saw nothing of the city only the country around it. Also the boys were greatly amused by the little trains and cars yet greatly pleased at the smoothness of the road-bed, the quickness of the trip, and being on time.

I have travelled on Sunday every time I have moved anywhere in the Army. I went to Sevier on Sunday. Left Sevier for N.Y. on Sunday. Left Long Island on Sunday & now have come here on Sunday. But I do not think they are going to wait until next Sunday to send us away from here. Wish they would.

One effect of the war that one sees is the great number of women acting as conductors on street cars, as chauffeurs of cars and in other capacities. You are always meeting girls in kahki, sometimes in trousers & legging but more often in shirts. They wear grey stockings, Father, usually instead of tan, with the

kahki skirts and blouses. They do not fight, but they release many a man so he can fight.

I wonder if Tom is writing any of his impressions. He has been kept close in camp with all the other men. Not once have they been allowed away so far, except this afternoon some officers took them down to see the points of historic interest in the town. There are plenty of them here and I wish they could stay here a little longer, but I fear we will not. But I should think Tom would have some impressions passing through the country for the first time. He is going to town tomorrow with his battery.

This part of England is beautiful at this time. The hedges, the green of the wheat and the brilliant saffron fields of mustard or some kindred plant. Everything is so clean, so fresh, so gloriously peaceful in its quiet beauty. It is hard to believe that just a few miles away men are fighting the most critical battle of modern times.

No doubt you have all thought a great many times about us since we came away - and the knowledge of that has often warmed my heart. And we have often thought of you, more perhaps than ever in our live(s) before. Believe me there will be some good day when we can see each other again - And we will think of you a whole lots more.

Now good-bye, and as the English women shout to us as we march past "The Best O' Luck." Today one told Captain Fletcher "I like yuu."

Addressed:
Mr. B.R. Lacy
Raleigh, N.C.
U.S.A.

With love,

Ben.

O.K.
Censored by B.R.
Lacy Jr: 1st Lt.
113 F.A: A.E.F.