

American
Y.M.C.A.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE
With the
American Expeditionary Force.

Sept. 11, 1918.

Dear Mother:-

Your letter came Sunday, and was greatly enjoyed. At the same time one came from Father too. so I felt real rich in mail from home. Letters never seemed to do quite so much good or be quite so desirable as at the present. And it does seem a long time between them. However I know it must seem the same way to you about our letters although I try to write to you at least twice a week. I fear I fail quite often, but I must come somewhere near that mark.

There is not a great deal to tell about. I went through the front line trenches yesterday up to within a hundred yards of the Germans. I got so tired pulling heavy boots out of the mud and of going all bowed over when the trenches were shallow that I hardly knew how to walk upright on a hard road - Mud! Well we saw it when the mud was about a foot deep. I know the Artillery has seen bad days and hours, but hats are off to the Infantry and Machine Gun outfits. They are the boys. See them squatting in their little concealed places ready to fire at any moment. See them carrying guns along those muddy ditches. Know they are likely to be shelled and charged any night for raids are constant occurrences. When you see "nothing to report" it often happens that a raid has cost the lives of several and as many more have been sent back wounded

Those fellows just itch to get a chance at the boche and when they do they always give more than they take. It has surprised me, and is still a cause of constant surprise how these boys can work night after night in the rain and mud, often get cut off from supplies for a time and still be cheerful and apparent happy. They are going to see the thing through, and they want to see it through as quickly as possibly. Maybe within a year or two we shall be at home again. At any rate I hope so.

Billets in a French village are a joke. The roof almost always leaks. Not where the officers, but where the men are sleeping. We fare pretty well. Get tired of beans and salmon and corned "Willie", but are usually glad to get that. Always thinking of home of the folks, the grub, everything. Our thoughts are always there. And we are all anxious to get back. I do hope we can manage it someday by next summer, or Christmas 1919.

Lots of love to all. Don't be surprised if you fail to hear from me. I am all right unless you hear otherwise.

Lots of love again.

Ben.

O.K.
B.R. Lacy Jr.,
Chaplain 113 F.A.

Addressed:

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Censored
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