

AMERICAN
Y. M. C. A.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE
With The American Expeditionary Force.

Sep. 25, 1918.

Dear Father:-

If love is shown by letters, then you ~~and~~
~~me~~ love me about four times as much as anyone else in the
world. But for your letters I do not know how I would ex-
ist. Today is another "mail day" and everybody is happy
over it, but most of all I am happy because I got the mail,
and also because I got some myself. Four splendid letters
from you, with clippings and poems. How I love you for them
all. If I had the time I would try to rapay in kind, but
writing for me is almost an impossibility.

Take my program for the last few days. Moved
to this position after the last letter I wrote home (written
with pencil and telling of a battle). We moved in the night,
as all movement of artillery is done near the front, and it
rained every single moment while we moved. We made camp at
3:30 A.M. in an entirely strange place and everybody as wet
as rats. The next day I was the first officer and one of the
first men about, and after attending to various things here
I got a brigade Dodge truck and went "way off yonder" along
the front about 100 kilometers or more and attended to every-
bodies' business, got a truck full of mail for the Brigade,
bought what little chacolote and cigarettes and begged what
writing paper I could for the men. Spent one night in a town
so full of officers and men you could not get anything to eat

in a hotel or restaurant, and only by finest luck managed to get a Y.M.C.A. lady to engage me a room in a private home. I say a room, a cot with five other officers in a room. Oh! but it was good to touch some sheets again.

Yesterday I went all over the country with that loaded truck. Had a time trying to get in. Roads blocked with truck teams everywhere. Had two punctures, and when we finally got to Brigade Hdqs it had moved, and no one knew where it was. I got back here however at 1:00 A.M. This morning found Hdq and came back to get these good letters. Now I am getting ready to go to the gun positions just as soon as I can get this letter off to you on the next mail.

Am not at all surprised at what Dr. Anderson said. I have always thought the same thing, and have known it for some years. So often men have told me "If you ever are as good a man as your tather you will be all right." I have always wanted to be. I don't knoe about "mother-love" and "father-love" but I know I am always loving Father and Mother more and more each day, and it seems to me there can be no distinction in our case for you both gave me all I have and you are both "one person" in a very peculiar sense. How I have loved you all lately. And I love Tom as I never dreamed I could love anyone except you and mother and Emma.

One reason I want this war ro leave me alive is so I can go back and tell you all of the love I bear you and make you believe what I say. This war has deepened the love of many a man on both side the Atlantic, and love that lasts through the war is going to abide forever.

While on my trip I tried to see some of our wounded, but could not find out where they are. It is almost impossible to find friends in this country, for anywhere near the front one is forbidden to tell where he is and there is no way to find our unless you run right over the man's regiment or himself. Take Lenoir Chambers, Noel Van Wagener, Frank Thompson, I know where none of them are, and I only know where Gordon Smith, Walter Clark and Don Scott are by heresay. Will be glad when I get where I see the latter more regularly.

But we are learning every day and every night that we are not over here for our own comfort, and Americans are going to hate war so much when peace comes that we shall never be willing to engage in any except one like this one to put down wrong. And I have an idea that German war philosophy is going to be smashed before many more months and the German people are going try to gain the world by peaceful means if they would own it.

Again aviators have dropped Peace Propaganda documents. This time in English, but I did not see it this time. I hope we can do the work next year, and am beginning to think we can, but it will be a hard pull. Austria, Bulgaria & Turkey will be hard put to this winter and there may be a break before spring. At that time I figure we are going to deal a terrific blow.

Must close - Love to each and every one at home.

Your affectionate boy,
Ben.

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

Addressed:

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

Censored

B.R. Lacy Jr.,
Chaplain, F.A.