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Nov. 25, 1917.

Dearest Family in the World,

I have a great deal I want to tell you and a great deal of doubt about what the censor will allow me to tell - I have carefully perused the censorship regulations and I glean from them that one can write that one is still breathing air and that is about the limit except of course the signature that I understand is generally left uncensored. Of course there are censors and there are censors. There are those who use judgement and common sense and then there are those who following the regulations to the letter make your letter look like one of those fancy paper covers that Maria used to put on the kitchen shelves.

To start at the beginning a rather where I left off - One still day shortly after I wrote, in the afternoon, we hoisted anchor and with Band playing and men cheering we glided past the many ships in the harbor, past H.----- and its dainty white outlying villages, past the old, worn, rocky shores and leaving the land of Evangeline

silouetted in deep blue against a brilliant orange sunset steamed out to sea right down the silver path of the full moon.

We started our trip under the most auspicious circumstances with first class passage assigned and everyone in high spirits, but gradually the disagreeable captain who had in charge the general arrangements on board reduced us to a state of the criminal class by first chasing us out of the lounging room 2d confining us to the after part of B deck, and the second class dining room, and 3d by giving free access to both these retreats to dough boys who crowded them to a point of disgust. Our one consolation was good food in the first class dining room.

Then followed a series of very long days all of which were more or less alike. it made me think of a rainy week-end party where every one is required to stay indoors and gets all fed up with everyone else and life in general. We gaged at the horizon played cards, sang songs, read everything on board, played leap frog and listened to submarine tales from which it seemed that we had about one chance in ten thousand of ever reaching shore, but I found it impossible to get up any amount of excitement over our chances. As a matter of fact I was lots more afraid of sea-sickness than I was of subs. And once (only once) while I was

in the lounging room and the sea was rolling considerably I became suddenly very conscious of the ships motion, and remembering C. K's remedy I betook myself as straight as possible to me state room and lay down – result sleep and recovery.

After that we had some rough weather but it didnt faze me. One night I was dreaming that Governor ~~was~~ was running away with me when there was a clatter and a smash – I heard excited voices in the hall and people rushing about. Th alarm whistle so I waited – Across the floor shot my trunk and banged against the bunk across the way – My shaving powder can took flight from its perch on the shelf and landed on Thomases' pillow – The old ship seemed to want to lay right down on its side –

Rest of the trip however was comparatively calm and uneventful. Then one day we saw ye great olde hills off in the distance – all rounded and plotted off in greens and browns with bits of forest here and there and an old castle once in a while showing up against the sky. That night our feet were again on solid earth – We unloaded our baggage and waited in the rail way station for our turn to board the trains. The long night was passed in playing hockey with tobacco

cans, running races. and shooting craps. It sounded very funny to hear "Shoot the shilling"! Sleep was out of the question. Finally at 6-30 a.m. we took the last roll call and got aboard one of these funny toy trains. Oh! what a wonderful ride. The train went very slowly - and we would frequently exercise by getting out and run by the side of it. My eyes nearly popped out as we past through just that section of the country that I have studied most and some of the cottages and houses seemed like old friends - I even knew what the backs of some of them looked like. It was provoking not to be able to stop and study them more carefully and sketch, but that will have to be done after the war. During the evening before we had been issued rations which everyone proceeded to devour during the night. The next day we subsisted on coffee which the good women issued and chocolate. We reached our destination in the afternoon lined up our trunks and "luggage" on the dock and marched about three miles out to "Rest Camp" (who ever named it certainly had a keen sense of humor) Crowds of people all along the street silently gaging and hords of kiddies running along side asking fa American pennies.

We were assigned to the last batch of tents, tiny ones, and ten men to the tent. Not having

brought our bedding rolls with us we were issued blankets but no cots. I was sent to arrange for mess and discovered that since we had not brought our mess kits along it would be impossible. It began to rain and we were worn and tired and on the point of explosion when we were given town leave and I spent the night in a real hotel - In a great big bed with snowy sheets - And before I went to bed had a real bath in a tub full of hot water - I had never appreciated a bath before; I had never known what it meant to really enjoy a bath. But there was something sublime, almost religeous, about that bath. And when I get back home I intend to establish a religeous sect of bath worshipers - I don't mean ~~any con~~ in competition to C.K's church or Cousin Joe's, but something along the line of the old Roman baths with a few modernizing touches. The next evening we were not given town leave until quite late and it was impossible to get the same decent room. Three of us looked all over town for a room and finally took the only one available - at "The African Family House" - Think of it! and me from Alabama! Then Percy Pyne and I took a room at a quite respectible hotel and were quite comfortable. The elderly landlady was particularly nice to us and invited us to dinner with her and her quite charming

daughter - It was a sumptuous dinner too with old wine and all sorts of rare dishes - In order to reciprocate Pere and I the following day invited the charming daughter for a ride and hiring a car went out to see old Winchester cathedral, one of the oldest in England, parts of it dating back to old Norman times - We had tea in a quaint little old shop by an open fire where the windows, the wainscoting, the people and the cat, all looked like an old print. The following day Pere and I took a long bicycle ride way out in the country and had tea and back in time for a Turkish bath and a real feed. My! how I enjoy good food with this army apetite!

Orders for departure were received and Pere and I settled up at the hotel and left for the wharf. In settling up we discovered that that blamed old "charming" ~~landlady~~ proprietoress had charged us for that delightful dinner to which she had so graciously invited us - From the hotel we went to a restaurant and ate a disgusting amount of food and then to the ship. We were assigned to first class passage because we were cadet officers. There were two classes and the only difference between them was that ~~there were no~~ the 2d class was with horses and the first class was without. Down the hole we piled - all the stalls were whitewashed including the slat floor - And braying and neighing

we took our stalls, unrolled our blanket rolls and made ourselves "comfortable". We were then issued our first hard tack (not so bad at that, something like bran and pop corn), bully beef Jamb and some smelly cheese and coffee which is simply mixed with hot water and there you, pretty good too. Of course bathing and shaving facilities were rather limited but I went down in the hole fished out my trunk and with a bucket of water and a towel I made myself gentlemanly comfortable if not genuinely clean. It was surprising to see how everyone kept up their spirits under these circumstances. The trip was very, very rough. I was detailed to guard duty and was on deck practically the entire night and as the gale grew into a storm I had difficulty in "walking my post in a proper military manner". And down below I could hear a rattle of cans as bully beef and marmalade showered down from the rafters, and the bang of trunks and freight shifting. The wind died down and just at day break it came into view. The light in the East became rosier and rosier until the great fleecy clouds over the sky were trimmed in color and then burst into full color as the glorious red sun came up back of the masts and spires of the low lying city to the right of the great red and green cliffs. We glided into the smooth harbor and docked.

Out to "rest camp" again and were issued more blankets - very smelly ones - and we were all very suspicions of cooties but slept well.

Next day we went to town had a delightful bath and the most abomnable shave I have hope to have. The barber was une belle petite fille. It was just like a dental operation and I gripped the arms of the chair and called her all sorts of uncomplimentary names and she would smile and shove on - Deliver me, henceforth, from this "Woman's Rights" stuff - I am off of it for life. I sampled "du vine russe" and had a delightful dinner.

Then one morning at 2 in the morning we were ordered out and we marched to the station through the rain - Or rather I should say they for I was in charge of the baggage detail and rode in style.

We had sandwiches issued to us and these supplimented with coffee issued by the women at the stations through which we passed constituted our days rations.

Passing through this lovely country it is easy to see at least one reason why the French fight like demons. We arrived at our destination in the afternoon and were assured out on the subs to our Barracks. These were an apportment house in a semi-completed state - and some day it will be some apportment house but just now

there is no heat, no light and no hot water - but it was dry and that was appreciated. Had a big dinner in town.

Next morning I went around to see Notre Dame - This was one of the most impressive occasions of my life - Called up Mrs. Barrett Andrews but she was out - The next day I visited the Invalades and the tomb of Napolian - In the court of the Invalades were a great many war relics captured from the Huns - guns, mortors and aeroplanes. And in the center of the court in a large tent opened in the front was Capt. Guynemier's machine in which he brought down 19 German machines - There were throngs of people around it and it was all decorated with flowers.

Some of us went out to Versailles - Lord what a place! What architecture! what trees and vistas! The Petit Trianon is surpurb - And I felt like walking right up to the little farm buildings and shaking hands with them -

While we were walking through the woods from the cottages we approached a group of officers and I was just taking a tuck in my back prepared to salute when one of them shot out toward us and I shot out toward him and around we walsed and yelled - It was old Lewis Hubbard from Montgy and Auburn - He is a 1st Lieut. in the Engineering Corps. My friends went back to barracks and I stayed out to dinner with Lewis - and maybe we didn't have a good

time -

After calling up Mrs. Barrett Andrews several times and unsuccessful I decided to go out to see her - Took a taxi out and fortunately found her at home - Durn good thing for I was banking on an invitation to lunch as I was dead broke. She did - and we had a very enjoyable time - I enjoyed particularly getting some first hand news from home, and hearing about Chas. H.

While I was in the vicinity I went around to see the Arch de Triumph and the Eifle Tower. Not that I give a rap about the Eifle Tower but I wanted to count it in the "high buildings I have spit off of".

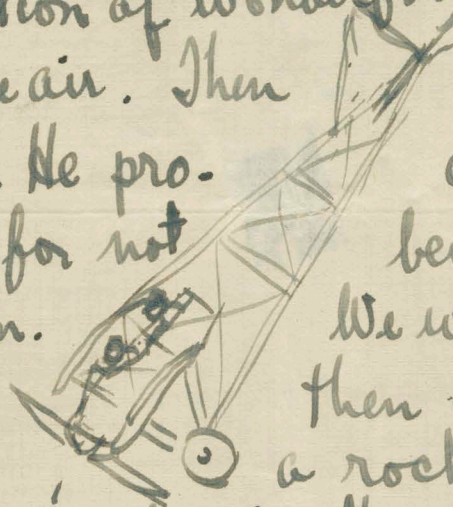
Then off again for another days ride on the train to a camp where we waited for two or three weeks doing all sorts of jobs, to occupy the time. The most interesting event of my stay there was the receipt of my first and only letter - I took the interesting looking plain envelope to a quiet, sequestered spot, lit a cigarette and made myself comfortable for the complete enjoyment of the promised contents - With trembling hands, bated breath and beating heart I open the precious package — An advertisement for "Woman's Suffrage"! And to think, there was a time when I considered voting for Womans Suffrage. Cousin Kate, from henceforth I am with you heart and soul.

At last orders arrive for us to report to a certain camp for instructions in flying - At last! praise Aloh! Got up the next morning at 2-30 am. Woke the men and went over to wake the C.O. "Are you going to attend formation, Sir?" "Exactly", says he as he rolled himself up into a comfortable ball and starts breathing deep again. We had a corking breakfast prepared by some of our own men, and then a beautiful trip to here.

While I was busying myself about the station trying to call up the camp I met Old Chas. Holsey and Capt. D'Olier - He had been told that I was at the station and hustled down to see me with "Hello Pen, are you broke?" Now that's what I call some greeting - Capt. D'Olier phoned out to camp for me and soon there were trucks to take us out, and a bang-up dinner waiting for us - We were assigned to comfortable barracks with good bunks and sheets -

In the afternoon we were issued our flying clothes and all fixed up - and rearing to go. The next two days were foggy and we couldn't fly. I was placed in a class of six and scheduled to report at 6.45 am. and 12.45 pm each day - The field is some three miles away (the one I am assigned to) and we all pack up in an auto truck and away, except one who stays to ride over with the monitem. M. Jonche.

Well it was my turn and I didn't know it so I rode over in the truck. When I arrived at the field M. Fonche was waiting in his machine and proceeded to ball me out in French part of which I grasped. He then ordered me in. I buttoned up, put on my helmet and fastened the strap. "Contact!" "Contact" the mechanic repeats and gives the propeller a spin. A wild whirr, ~~the machine~~ and a terrible wind; the machine quivered and shook and started bumping across the field at a terrific rate. Faster and faster then a sensation of wonderful smoothness as we lifted into the air. Then the fun commenced. He proceeded to punish me for not being there to ride over with him. We would glide along smoothly then drop a few hundred feet like a rocket, rocking from side to side in the mean while and I felt a big strain on my diaphram and felt much like a child looks when you toss it up, but I tried to avoid that look for every now and then he would turn around, look at me and grin and I tried to grin back to make him believe that I was enjoying the rough stuff. After what seemed an hour of this we made a final dive for earth and I was informed that I had been up about 12 minutes.



After all six in our class had been given a joy ride in order to get them familiar with the feel of the air, I was then ordered in again and we were given instructions in handling the controlls. Off and up we go again and what was my surprise to see him put his hands up on the side of the machine - It was bang up to me to do my first driving and I felt the responsibility very keenly - I couldn't help but wish that he would have as much respect for his neck as I had for mine - When I pointed her up too high he would signal to peak a bit - One wing would hike up and he would go "comme çà" then I would move stick "au gauche" and so on. A little of this and he settled back and put his blooming feet up on the edge of the car and signaled me to turn to the right, I got balled up thinking that the rudder controll was the same as on a "Flexible Flyer" and shot it around to the left - He shook his head and scowled at me and I knew I was wrong, after a while I made the turn. Oh so cautiously! and then we came down - He made me peak but he of course did the actual landing.

Made two more flights that afternoon - the last one was back to the hangers. And I was greatly impressed with the amount I have to learn - One thing for instance, from the air, every-

where I looked I saw good landing fields - so really good landing fields are not so easily distinguishable as one might think. Then for the next two days I flew, handling the controls in the air - Next he gave me lessons in landings, which by the way are lots more difficult to make than to look at. The first was bum. I peaked too much, nearly missing the field and didn't "redress" ~~enough~~ (pull down tail) quick enough. "You want to bump my head loose?" But the others were better and after the last M. Fonche said "Very, Very good, Monsieur Stoot," and I felt like I had just won the Worlds series single handed.

I have now lost almost completely that sensation of height, and the noise of the motor and the wind pressure is not so disconcerting as it was at first and can consequently devote my undivided attention to business, and believe me, its all needed case its a mighty bad place to get cabobolated in the mind.

Then a couple of foggy, windy days when there was no flying - We stood inspection, did drill, and shot craps, kicked foot ball, and enjoyed Bull Durham tobacco which is now procurable in small quantities from the Q.M. I went into the camp barber shop for a hair cut but when

I saw a greasy Algerian ahead of me I decided to wait until I could get to town - There are things lots worse than long hair -

Friday we had good promises for flying but I went up with M. Fouche and we had been traveling along a shat while when bingo we butted into a cloud. It's a queer sensation to be traveling along at high speed and not able to see anything but your machine. We made a steep dive, came out of the cloud and came back home.

Well this brings me just ~~just~~ about up to now. I am contented, well and very happy to be at last training. We are comfortable and fairly well fed. The most trying thing in connection with this life is the fact that I haven't received but that one blamed letter from home and I am very anxious for news.

Charley invited me to dinner with him in town. Because of the "customs of the service" he couldn't be seen dining in public with a frock private so he and Capt. Dillie and I had a bang up dinner in his sitting room. Lordie! it did me good to see Chas. and hear him read bits from letters from Margie. Something big happened for Chas. that night - he received a telegram which made him very happy and all together it was a great evening. He had to

go out for a while before dinner so I slipped in and snatched a real bath before his return.

Out at camp the bath arrangements are most amusing - There are accomodations for some 10 at a time - They all stand under the showers and the old Frenchman turns on enough hot water to get you wet all over then turns it off and you soap all over. It is then turned on again for a short while and he yells "Fini"! and those fellows who are still besoaped are just out of luck for you have to move out and make room for the next shift.

Well it's a great life and I am enjoying every minute of it and I am in perfect health. The only real hardship that I have felt is the wide separation from the people whom I love and who love me and the lack of news from them - I know that when the postal authorities finally locate me I will get a flock of letters but until then I will have to continue to think of you often and imagine what you are doing.

With love and heaps of it -

Penrose

By the way, Margie, That was a good bunch about Magazines for the soldiers - There was oodles of reading matter at Plattsburg - But over here we have found reading matter of any kind very scarce. I am going to write you a chummy letter real soon, and tell you lots of things so please mam send me a couple of old Atlantic Monthlies and a Century or two.