

The following is a transcription of the series of letters written by Ralph Miller Carhart during World War I to his parents, Charles E. & Ethel M. Carhart, his brothers, John C. and Charles E. "Happy", and his sister, Elsie Mae, all of Wayne, Nebraska. The letters were all written during the period from January, 1918 through September, 1919 while Ralph was serving as a Private in the U. S. Army. Ralph and his friends, Knox Jones and Fritz Mildner, also of Wayne, had all enlisted in the Army at the same time. Ralph was 18 years old when he enlisted and did not complete high school until his return home from Europe and discharge from the Army. He was born on 5/14/1900, enlisted on 5/30/18 and was discharged on 9/24/19. He had served a total of 14 months (less 6 days) in the U.S. Army.

The original letters were handwritten in pencil and, because Ralph's handwriting is often difficult to read - and I am familiar with it and generally able to decipher it, I have undertaken the task of transcribing his series of letters in order to preserve the record of his World War I Army service experiences for his descendants. Throughout the transcription, I have attempted to retain the original spelling and punctuation. Whenever I was not confident of the spelling, or chose to make an "educated guess" at the logical "translation" of an illegible word, I identified my indecision with a (?) behind the word. Whenever I added a clarification or comment of my own, it is in parentheses preceded by an asterisk.

Charles V. Carhart
(Son of Ralph M. Carhart & Fauneil B. Senter Carhart)
March 25, 1996

Camp Merritt, N. J.
July 8, 1918.

Dear Folks:

We left Fort Sheridan at 8:45 Saturday night. Left Chicago at 12:00 that night. Crossed under the river at Detroit in a tunnel about 1 ½ miles long. Rode in Canada all day Sunday and came out at Niagara Falls about five o'clock that afternoon. Stopped for a while to look at the Falls. They certainly were great. Crossed the river over the Rapids just below the Falls. Came to Chicago on the Northwestern & from there to Buffalo on the Michigan Central. Changed there to the New York Central & followed the Erie Canal through Syracuse, Utica, & Rochester to Albany. From there we followed down the west bank of the Hudson to this place. The scenery along the Hudson is the best I have ever seen. We ran along right beside the river and the mountains rose on the other side. The cliffs were of solid rock, some black granite and were covered with forests. There was hardly a cleared space to be seen. On the river there were all kinds of boats & we even saw some of the old sailing ships used in 1700.

We arrived here at seven o'clock this morning. A whole troop train left for New York to go on transport just as we arrived. They were all engineers or quartermasters except for one bunch of medics who are attached to the 16th Engineers.

The camp here certainly is a whopper. At present there are only 15,000 men here & that is said to be extraordinarily small. About ten thousand of these are medics so you can see that there is lot of us.

As this is nothing but an embarkation camp we expect to leave in a few weeks at least. Some of the men have been here a longer time, though.

We met Warren Shultheis to-day & he took us to dinner. He is a sergeant & gives chloroform & ether in the operating room. His bunch is Evacuation Hospital number 9 and they have been here for 5 weeks.

We haven't been assigned as yet so don't know what we will get to do. We get the rest of our equipment to-morrow & take the over-seas exam Wed. So far we have about sixty lbs. of stuff to carry. All our things that we had when you were at Sheridan have been taken from us. We now have: two work suits, two pairs of muleskin shoes, (without seams in the toe, with hob-nails on the sole & a ring of steel shaped like a horse-shoe on the heel.), two pairs of spiral or wrap leggins, a canteen, knapsack, mess kit, brush, comb, toothbrush, soap, three blankets & I don't know what all. The men here have their steel helmets & some have their guns. We also get a first-aid kit.

You can tell how large this camp is when I tell you that there are three Post Exchanges, four Y.M.C.A.'s, a Liberty theater that must hold 10,000 at least & Merritt Hall a whopper of a restaurant on the cafeteria plan. In the same building there is a pool hall with about 20 tables.

You will be unable to write to me as yet as we haven't been split up into companies & haven't any address. Anyhow, we expect to leave here in a few days though we may not leave for a couple of months. We were not to leave Fort Sheridan until the 15th, but orders were received to send us immediately & all boys on passes were sent for. I intended to come home because all men on shipment could get leave to go home but our orders to leave changed everything. If we stay here long enough I will have my picture taken & send it home.

Must get back to the barracks now.

With love,
Ralph.

August 10, 1918
Thessee, France

Dear folks:

Will write to you as often as possible but can't say how often that will be. Will write once a week at least, and will attempt to write oftener.

Knox, Fritz and I have been separated. Fritz left one day and Knox the next. Don't know where they were going or anything about it, but don't suppose I will see them again over here.

As I think I said in my last letter, I am assigned to the Sanitary School here. As I understand it, we take a course in first aid here. School starts Monday, or at least I have been told so. Don't know how long it lasts.

Wish I knew whether you were receiving my letters or not. It is pretty hard to get mail here but we will receive it eventually, even though it does come pretty late. Of course I have received none as yet. If you possibly can please send me the Herald every week. We haven't any news from the U.S. except through the French edition of the New York Herald & as I am "broke" I can't buy that.

Don't think you are allowed to send any money, but you can find out by asking the postmaster. As I understand it he censors all your mail before it is sealed. If you can, send me some candy. Get the hardest stuff you can get; something that will not melt on the way. The only candy you can get here is sweet chocolate and that is not milk chocolate.

We are billeted in a small village called Thesee. It is said to be one of the oldest villages in France. The place I am writing in was put up before nails were known.

The main road through here is supposed to have been built by Caesar and there is a ruins of an old guard house here, which was built by him.

A few miles distant is a town called Montrichard where Richard the Third of England was imprisoned. He was kept in an old castle which is high up on a bluff.

I stand formations at an old Chateau which used to be the home of a German Count. I guess he has left the country. I know I should if I were him.

Am feeling fine and am going back for thirds & fourths at meals.

How is everyone at home? Write as soon as possible as I have received no word from anyone.

My address is

Pvt. Ralph Carhart
Sanitary Training School A. P. O. 727
American E. F.
Love to all
Ralph

Somewhere in France
August 20, 1918

Dear folks:

Well, I have been assigned permanently at last. Will give you my address, right now, for the duration of the war. It is

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No. 12, 1st Division
A.P.O. 729
American E.F.

Have received no word from you as yet, and expect none for another month. Only wish I knew whether you have received all of my previous letters. Think I can stand it another month although I should like to receive word as often & as soon as possible, but suppose you are anxious to know how I am. The fact of the matter is I never felt better in my life, and am assigned to the best Company and Division in the U.S.Army. The food is fine. Just to show you I will tell you what I had for supper to-night. This is the list. Creamed potatoes, baked beans, two pickles, an onion, bread & butter, and cake with a dip of some sort. How is that for supper?

As I wrote in my last letter, I expected to stay in Thesee for a month; but another boy from my Company & myself were transferred to another Company. Fortunately both he and myself

came to the 12th Ambulance Company. So I have one fellow with me who has come from Fort Logan.

Find out from Postmaster Berry what you are allowed to send me, and if you can please send me those things you said you were making.

Am "dead broke" at present, but it is only a matter of a few days until pay day, so will soon have enough money. Have two months pay coming. I tried to make an allotment (guess that is spelled wrong) at Camp Merritt, but could not.

Forgot to ask you before, but did you receive my insurance papers?

Am feeling fine myself. How are all of you at home? Must close as this is all the paper I have.

Love to all

Ralph.

France

August 25, 1918

Dear folks:

To-day is Sunday, so I thought I would write you a letter. It is just about dinner time, so I don't know how long my letter will be. I don't intend to miss dinner at any rate, as we get too good feeds here. We certainly have some fine cooks.

As I can't be certain that all of my letters reach you I will give you my address again. It is:

Private Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No.12
A. P. O. 729
American E.F.
France

As far as I know of now that will be my address till the end of the war. Hope so anyway.

Signed the pay card yesterday. Expect to sign the pay roll this week and get paid soon. My service record hasn't come yet so I will probably only get casual pay which is \$7.50 a month. I understand, though, that when my service record comes I will receive the balance of my pay. I draw \$33.00 a month over here so for two months I get \$66.00. My insurance is \$6.40 a month making \$12.80. $\$66.00 - \$12.80 = \$53.20$ I should receive. $\$53.20 - \$15.00 = \$38.20$ I should receive after my service record arrives. Will try to send it home when I get it, but don't know when that will be.

Please send me the "Herald" if you possibly can; also the High School paper, if they have one. Save all of my magazines if you can, especially the "American Boy". You needn't try to

send it over, though. As regards packages, you can find out from the post-master what you are allowed to send. I wrote all this in my other letter, but want to be sure you get it.

Am not allowed to say where we are, but we are farther from the front than when I last wrote. The fact of the matter is, I don't know where we are myself, except that we are in France.

We get the French edition of the New York Herald every day. It is printed in English. I see that the Allies are having the best of it, and all of the boys are pretty optimistic. Of course they all want the war to end, and they have there own ideas on when and how it will stop. Some of them think it will cease by December, but for myself I don't bank on its ending sooner than next spring. We all think we have the Germans on the run, though, and that it is just a matter of time from now on.

Well, my equipment is not enough to fill my closet at home, any more. I have: 2 pr. of shoes; 2 suits underwear; 4 pr. sox; 1 pr. spiral puttees; 1 pr. pants; 1 coat; 1 shirt; 1 over-seas cap; 1 helmet; 1 gas-mask; 1 mess kit; 1 pack carrier; 1 blanket; 1 shelter half; 1 canteen; 1 axe; 1 first-aid packet; 1 medical belt; and my personal stuff. That is all I have to carry on a hike. An Ambulance company, though, rides in its cars. We have Fords & G.M.C.'s. Slept in my pup tent for about a week, but it didn't happen to rain so we came out all right.

Never felt better in my life. I've tried to butcher myself several times, but it didn't amount to much. Please write how everything is a home. Remember I have received no word as yet.

Love to all
Ralph.

Private Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No. 12
A.P.O. 729
American E.F.
France.

September 1, 1918

Dear Folks:

I intended to write you Wednesday, but was unable to get any paper until yesterday afternoon.

Thought surely I would be paid this month, but my service record hasn't arrived and I couldn't sign the payroll. Guess it means another month without any money. Haven't had any for so long that I'm getting used to it; but still I need a haircut once in a while, and could get my washing done right, for a few

francs. If I don't get a cent this month, will have \$79.80 coming next month & will try to send most of it home. Think I can get it there all right.

Is there any talk of another Liberty Loan in the states? If they have another I intend to take out a \$100 bond. To pay for it \$10 will be taken out of my pay each month for ten months. That will leave me \$16.60 a month which will be all that I need here. If they don't have another Loan soon, will try and send some money home out of every month's pay. May not send it home every month because I couldn't send enough; but as I won't use it, will keep it for a couple of months and send it all at once.

Suppose you have written, but haven't received a word as yet. Be sure and send me the Herald. We get a few magazines to read, but more wouldn't hurt anything.

Washed my clothes Thursday. It took about two hours to get them clean as I had nothing but cold water and a small bar of soap. They aren't entirely white now, but it's the best I could do.

Had a hot bath last night and changed underclothes & sox. Can't change anything else as I only have one shirt & one suit of clothes. Have to wear my blouse without a shirt when I wash my shirt. That hot bath felt fine as it was the first I'd had for over two weeks. Have had some cold ones, but couldn't get extra clean.

Have had quite a few plums to eat the last two nights. The people don't care as long as you take what are on the ground and there a hundreds of them there. The plums here are the little yellow ones which are fine. They also have lots of big purple prunes, but most of them are wormy this year so I'm not eating any. The people here say that they make wine out of the prunes, but I don't know what they will do with them this year.

Saw a cherry tree yesterday which still had cherries on it. They were mighty few, though. The apples here aren't even turning red. Saw on tree yesterday which looked as though it had ripe apples on it, but discovered that they were all wormy. The grapes here are of the white variety and will soon be ripe. Everybody in France seems to raise grapes, just like we raise corn back in the U.S. You very rarely see a corn field here and then only a few rows. By the way, they never plant a larger patch of ground than five acres in any single thing. They take a field and divide it into about twenty or thirty little patches and plant stuff all over. I guess one man only owns about twenty acres.

As a rule, the people here all live in villages and go out in the country to the farms every morning. The villages are about three or four kilometers apart. A kilometer is only five-eighths of a mile so you see how close they are. I think I

counted about seven from here. Often walk over to one after supper.

There is some of the prettiest scenery here I ever saw. The hills are always covered with forests, and when the sun sets behind them they certainly are pretty. Have never seen anything like it in the States, though I have seen sights which were just as good.

Have seen some of the big Allied bombing planes. I think there was a picture & description of one in the New York Herald recently. They have a wing spread of one hundred feet and are about ninety feet from nose to tail. They are build like a regular house inside and are said to hold twenty-six men. They must be all of fifteen feet high and look as large as the side of a house.

Started to walk to a town a few kilometers distant the other night, but stopped in a woods and ate wild blackberries until dark and then came back.

If you can get Knox' or Fritz' address please send it to me as I would like to write to them. Don't know a thing about either of them myself.

Write me about everything that happens in town and write as often as you can. If they publish the High School paper this year be sure and send it to me. Will write to John Wednesday if I can get some more paper. Writing paper is very hard to get over here and as you can only write on one side of the sheet it takes quite a bit for a letter. Can only write on one side for the reason that if you wrote on both the Censor might cut something on one side and the other side would be spoiled.

Well must close as it is about nine o'clock and I want to mail this letter before noon, and will be busy for some time now.

Love to all
Ralph.

Private Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No. 12
A. P. O. 729. 1st Division
American E. F.
France.

Sept. 27, 1918

Dear folks:

Well, I guess it's been about a month since I last wrote you. I'd have written sooner if I could, but it was impossible. Received a letter from dad the day before yesterday. It had six

paper drinking cups and a bunch of shaving papers in it. Don't know whether there had been a letter in it or not. It didn't reach me, at least. The top of the envelope was opened so it could have been lost out. Am hoping now to get a letter from you.

Got a letter from Fritz about a week ago. Haven't had a chance to answer it yet. He is with the 13th Railway Engineers. Have not heard from Knox as yet.

It is pretty hard to write a letter home, because there isn't anything of importance to say. I'm always well, as usual, and eating all that I can get. Guess, I won't be able to sign the pay roll this month, so will have four months pay coming if I get to sign it next month. Borrowed twenty francs this afternoon. I absolutely had to do it as I need a hair cut, and there are some other things I want. Twenty francs is only about four dollars, not quite that much, in fact. So it isn't as much as you would think. Suppose you have heard a good deal about the Saint Mihiel drive, and have probably already heard something of the drive which started yesterday.

It is claimed that the Saint Mihiel drive is the best and easiest one since the war began. The casualties were unusually small. Mount Sec is a hill which the French have tried for years to take. The Germans had all sorts of fortifications there, besides concrete dugouts which they claim ran under all the hill. Didn't go in them myself. The French held the hill for fifteen minutes once, but their losses were so enormous that that(?) they gave it up. The Americans didn't try to take it; instead they went around both sides of it and had it in no time.

In the woods back of the lines the Germans had regular houses, with gardens, walks and everything like that. They retreated so fast that they left lots of things. In a German canteen were some fresh pork chops, some flour, sugar, salt, potatoes, and everything like that. The boys made flap-jacks and had pork chops and rabbit stews.

We also captured a German field hospital. They got all the patients out all right, but left a good bunch of supplies. There were about sixteen cases of mineral water which the boys drank. There were also some cigars & cigarettes. There were kegs of beer in almost every building. Some of the boys drank a little too much.

From the looks of things the Germans couldn't go fast enough with the wagons so they left them and retreated on horse back. At least there were wagons all along the road.

The soldiers must have had their good times back there, for there were bowling alleys in the woods with beer vaults close by.

Found a German propaganda paper in a dugout. It is called,
"America in Europe" & is published in Frankfurt. It certainly
is great.

Well, must close. Write soon. Love to all.

Ralph.

Private Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No.12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
American E.F.
France.

Oct. 14, 1918

Dear folks:

Well, am in a position to write again. Got my mail to-day.
Got the two letters from the boys in the States, the one you
forwarded and another. Got a box of candy from Gus Tronstrum
that was sent to Fort Sheridan. Don't see how it ever got
through. It's still good; at least I'm eating some of it right
now, and it tastes all right. Also received the letter from dad
which he wrote when we were in England. It was dated August 18.
I said we were in England, but I meant we had been in England.
We weren't at that time. As dad said, England certainly is a
great country. If he visits it some time after the war I want
to go along, if possible. Well, I'm going to stop writing until
I wash and shave. Haven't washed for five days nor shaved for
eight so its about time. Haven't had a bath for six weeks nor
changed underclothes in the same time: That bath was in a creek
of ice water, almost. Well, will finish as soon as I shave.

One hour later. Have shaved and washed up. Also had a
"cootie" hunt. This is an everyday occurrence (I don't know how
to spell any more) now. Have them pretty bad. The only way to
get rid of them is to boil all of your clothes & how can you do
that when you only have one uniform. Will get rid of them when
we reach the States, I guess. That seems to be our only chance.

I wanted awfully bad to take out a Liberty Bond this last
time, but was on Detached Service so didn't get the chance.
They take so much out of your pay each month until your bond is
paid for.

If I get paid this month I will have about \$100 coming and
will send home \$75. Please buy W.S.S. with it for me. They are
the next best thing to Liberty Bonds.

Things look pretty encouraging according to to-day's paper.
(Our "to-day's paper is always printed yesterday). Have just
received the word through it that Germany has accepted Wilson's

peace terms. It certainly sounds good & I hope that it is true. Some of the boys bank on being home by Christmas but I have no such hopes. Would like to be able to go to school the last half of the year though. Think I could finish with the rest of the bunch. I do think that I'll be home before school is out next summer, though. Things certainly look encouraging just at present.

The Allies are doing some great fighting as I know from experience. As I've seen a little fighting myself.

Have had stomach trouble for the past two weeks, but am better now. It was caused by uncertain meals, the grub, and sleeping conditions. Everybody was sick. Am back in barracks now, get three squares a day, & the food is great, so I ought to get well.

Am well enough so that I could make a 25 kilometer hike yesterday, at any rate. So I can't be so very sick. There were lots of boys who did drop out. The mud was awful and it was up hill all the time, or at least it seemed that way. Have hiked a lot farther than that, though. Of course we carried our "full" packs, too. My full pack now consists of a shelter half, blanket, mess kit, shaving set, and extra sox. Always wear my rain coat on a hike now as it's getting cold & rains much of the time. Hope they reach some kind of an agreement before it begins to snow or it will be pretty bad. Saw a bunch from the "Rainbow" Division the other day & they have theirs. They also have two blankets & it is full of holes. Some one stole my good one and a kid gave me this. I got two others & they were both taken also so I have but the one left. Guess it will do though. Have slept out in the rain with it, a shelter half & a rain coat for over two weeks now so I suppose I can stand it for some time to come. Well, it is time to close. It's getting dark in here anyway. Write often. Love.

Ralph.

Private Ralph **M.** Carhart
Ambulance Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
American E. F.
France.

Oct. 17, 1918

Dear Dad:

Received your letter of August 18 three days ago. Was just back from "up there" so was especially glad to get it. Have had all the excitement I want and have settled down to my part of

helping win the War. I don't think it is going to take such an awfully long time now. From what I have seen myself I know that the German people are anxious to have the War finished. I have seen a good many of them walk over to our lines and give up. They are glad of the chance to.

The same day I received your letter I got a box of candy from Clyde & Elsie Tronstrum. Don't know how in the world it ever came through but it did.

Yesterday I got six letters. Four were from Mother and were dated August 12 & 26; & Sep. 2 & 9. One of the others was from the kids & the last was from Maes & John. One of Mother's letters had a Postal money order for \$5 in it. Will get it cashed as soon as I can find a Y.M.C.A. It will come in handy all right.

They rob us over here. For instance a bar of "sweet chocolate" the size of a Hershey, which is nothing but common chocolate with a little sugar in it, costs two francs. A franc is worth 20¢ so the chocolate costs 40¢. Everything else costs in proportion so you can see what we are up against. Must stop now as it is dinner time. Will finish as soon as I get back.

Just got back from a dinner of boiled cabbage with lots of bacon in it, boiled potatoes, bread and rice pudding. It isn't as good a meal as we usually get. Don't know what is wrong. But you see I ate the boiled cabbage which is more than I'd do at home. Have even eaten carrots & parsnips cooked.

Was going down the street this morning when the "top" told me to come in and sign the pay roll. Of course I didn't refuse. My service record came this morning so that is how I got to sign. The others signed yesterday. Will have some money at last, I guess. If I can find a Y.M.C.A. man I will send some home. The only things we need money for are hair cuts & such things as we can buy to eat. Army fare gets monotonous even if it is as good as we get. Some of the boys had a chicken supper last night. The chicken cost them 17 francs or \$3.40. Eggs cost about \$1 per dozen but the boys buy all that they can get. Any of the French women will cook you up a good meal if you get the stuff to cook. Bread is the one thing you can't buy. Of course you can't buy any sweet stuffs such as cake & the like and candy is about unknown.

Am sending in this letter the coupon which is to be posted on each Christmas package sent to a soldier. If this shouldn't reach you I'm not out of luck.

Am also sending you a German propaganda paper. Wrote on the top that I would mark the passages of interest, but find that I'd have to mark them all. Had some other copies, but lost them. Hope this one reaches you.

Mother says that you sent some magazines and the home papers, but I have received none of them. Can use all the

magazines you can send me as it is very hard to get anything to read.

Wish I could have some pancakes and honey this winter. They'd certainly go good. Have had pancakes four times, but only Karo syrup on them. They tasted pretty good though.

Will tell you about England as I saw it, when I get back. Must admit I thought it larger than it is, even though I knew it was small. All that I saw was even more level than the country around Wayne. It's an awfully pretty country.

The rainy season has started in. It rains night & day without stopping. They say it will keep this up until next spring. It gets dark about 5:30 now & light about 7:00. Wonder what it will be like in December?

Tell mother we still get our white bread all right. Expect we always will. She asked about my insurance papers. Tell her they are with my Liberty Bond. Guess you know where they are.

If you can find some way to send the knitting through the Red Cross it will reach me sooner. None of the other boys have been able to get an order for a package yet. Am badly in need of Keen Kutter safety razor blades. Can get nothing but Gillettes here. Can get those anyplace.

Hope my first letters have reached you by this time. It's funny you didn't get them if Knox's came through all right.

Got an overcoat, suit of heavy underwear, pair of sox, & pair of gloves this morning. Am going to take a bath & wash my shirt, then put on my new underwear & see if I can't get rid of the "cooties" for a while. Well must close for this time.

Your son
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
American E. F.
France

October 27, 1918

Dear Mother:

Just got through taking a hot bath. It's the first hot bath I've had in two months. I certainly feel a lot better now as I put on all new clothes. It feels fine to be rid of the cooties also. My skin is nothing but red blotches where they have bit me. Hope I don't get them again for a little while at least. It is impossible to keep entirely rid of them & I don't expect to do so until we get back to the States. The only way

to rid your clothes of them is by boiling and we don't have much of a chance to do that. If you have any money you can have a French woman wash your clothes but I haven't a cent myself as I have been unable to cash you money order as yet. A Y.M. will cash it but there has been none with us since I came to the outfit. However one of the boys is going over to the post-office to-morrow & I'm going to have him cash it for me. \$5.00 won't last long though, when you think that we pay 40¢ or two francs for a bar of chocolate. About all you can buy here though is chocolate, grapes, & nuts. The chocolate is sweetened but is not milk chocolate. The nuts are almonds & hazelnuts and are fairly good though the almonds are slightly bitter. The grapes are the big white ones & are better than any we ever get in the States, but of course they charge accordingly. Everybody here has a patch of grapes. Their grape patch is, I believe, their largest "field". All the grains are raised on small patches with a slice of something here and a slash of something else there. There are no real fields as we know them.

Received your letter of Sept. 30th & one of dad's from the same date on the 22nd. That is pretty quick work for the mail service.

In a letter to dad about a week ago I sent my coupon for a Christmas package & also sent him a German propaganda paper which I picked up during the St. Mihiel drive. Hope he received both of them. Am leaving it to you as to what to send in my Christmas package if the coupon gets there as I hope it does.

Will tell you what an ambulance company does. The ambulances themselves carry the patients from the aid stations to the hospitals in the rear. The ambulance company also has an aid station where wounds are redressed. Besides this ambulance company men go to the front as letter bearers. Have been up twice as a litter bearer. I have nothing to do with the ambulances or dressing station as am what is known as a "straight duty" man. "Straight duty" men have to do K.P. & guard when the company is not at the front besides being liable for all details. When we are back from the front as we are now the company doesn't have much of anything to do. We eat, sleep, are on wood or water details, do guard & such things when our turn comes. Aside from that we have nothing to do.

Have been on K.P. since a week ago yesterday but was relieved yesterday morning. K.P. in this outfit isn't bad at all. You get up at the same time as the others and are done with work in half an hour after supper. Have breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, and supper at five. It gets dark about five now-days & light about six.

I told you in another letter that I had signed the payroll for the first time over here. Well, we haven't been paid yet & don't know when we will be as the paymaster is in the hospital

with pneumonia. As soon as I get paid will (have) the "stars & Stripes" sent to you. It is the paper of the A.E.F. & is published in Paris. For eight francs or \$1.60 I can have it sent direct to you for six months. It is worth reading too.

We are going to have a big feed one of these days, I think; Roast chicken, pumpkin pies, etc. Intended to have it to-day but had to call it off for this date. Hear we are going to have it in the near future though. Had doughnuts night before last & cookies this noon. I got about eight doughnuts & seven cookies. They always give you more than a "taste" in this company. Have been having steak twice a day since we came here and the cooks were hard pressed for a time to get rid of all the meat. Have lots of flour & have baking powder biscuit with real cow butter & jam almost every night. Have some kind of desert every meal so you can see how we are fed. Have been having coleslaw every noon as the cooks have to get rid of the cabbage. It is good slaw too, with pickles, tomatoes & such things in it. We certainly feed great. It's almost supper time now so must cut my letter short. Write soon. Haven't received any of the papers or magazines yet. Love.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Co. No. 12
A. P. O. 729 1st Div.
American E. F.
France.

October 28, 1918

Dear Dad:

Am answering your letter of Sept. 30th which I received on the 22nd of this month. Got the letter with your money order in it all right but have been unable to cash it as yet. Think I can get it cashed this afternoon as one of the boys is going over to the post office & I will make it over to him & have him cash it. Haven't seen anything of your registered letter but expect it will come in time. Haven't been paid yet, either, so am still out of luck for money. Signed the payroll though so expect to get it some day, but don't know when. Have borrowed only 32 francs or about \$6.40 since I hit France and that is all the money I have had. Money doesn't go very far over here. Would hate to run the car as gasoline costs \$1.75 per gallon. Rather steep I'd say.

Haven't received the Herald or any of the magazines as yet, but they may come in time. I certainly hope they do. We never

have enough reading matter & a magazine goes clear through the company.

About a week ago I mailed you a letter containing a coupon for my Christmas package and also a German propoganda paper which I picked up during the St. Mihiel drive. I had a bunch of them, all different, but some of the other boys wanted one so I gave them away. They are all along the same line anyway. Found them in a cave which was electric lighted, had a stove, feather bed & such things in it. It also contained two kegs of beer & a lot of wine. Some of the boys finished the beer & wine in short order. Didn't have any myself.

Have had a number of frosts already this fall. The leaves are falling off of the trees & some trees are entirely bare now. Has been chilly enough so that we have been wearing our overcoats, but the sun is coming out by "streaks" today so it is a little warmer than usual.

We took a little hike this morning from light until half past nine. It's the first we've done for some time. Guess it didn't hurt us any. Took a shave as soon as we got back & am feeling pretty good now.

Three or four batteries of French 75's went past this morning. In back of each battery was their wine barrel. It's a hogshead on a cart & they always have it along. I don't believe the French people ever drink water. The soldiers have an issue of wine every morning & when the French "doughboy" is on the march he always carries his canteen full of wine.

The people here sell quite a bit of wine & beer to the boys. There are no regulations against it & so some of the boys get a little to much once in a while. They rarely cause any trouble though.

Well must close for this time. Will write again soon.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
American E.F.
France

Somewhere in Luxemburg
Nov. 25, 1918.

Dear dad:

Well, it's been about a month since I last wrote but I have an opportunity today so am making the best of it. Did not have

time until about three days ago & this is the first paper I've been able to get. Just got this about five minutes ago.

As was announced in the papers the 1st Div. is part of the Army of Occupation so you see we are pretty busy. You notice that I've headed this "Somewhere in Luxemburg". Of course you know that this little state is an independent country or duchy & also supposed to be a neutral. But, the Germans overran it & we are now in it, but of course are harming nothing.

The people here speak several different languages. For instance, in the house where I am writing this the father speaks both German & French, while the mother & children speak nothing but German. The Mrs. has two brothers in the States, one in Seneca, Ks., & the other in Okache, Okla. She showed us their pictures last night. Have run on to quite a bunch of English speaking people over here. In one of the cities I ran into one man who had been a street car conductor in Chicago for six years. He says he is going back to the States. Brewer, the boy who has been with me since Fort Logan is from Hoboken, N.J. & met a man the same day who had lived there & knew all the places. They had quite a time together.

This is quite a little country, too. The people have not entered into the War at all but I don't know what their feelings have been. They don't seem to be able to do enough for us now at any rate. Am sleeping in the living room of this house.

Either German or French money is accepted here so the boys who got "marks" as "souvineers" are spending them & having a fine time. Of course I'm broke. By the way, though, was informed yesterday that my service record has arrived so expect to be paid about \$125 next pay day. That means about 625 francs. I owe about 10 francs but Brewer owes me thirty so I'll have about twenty more.

To show what the war has done to this country I will quote you a few prices that I picked up. Eggs are worth 16 marks a dozen. A mark is worth 24¢ American. so you can see what "oeufs" cost. Milk chocolate costs 6 marks (it's as good as Hershey's, but too much price for me). Hot waffles cost us one frank apiece & apples four (about the size of a walnut) for a mark.

Were in one of the large cities of Luxemburg for two days. It's just like the States except for price. They have five & ten cent stores, hardware, meat markets, groceries & even furniture stores. The five & ten cent stores had teddy bears & toys of all kinds. I certainly was surprised. The store keepers have window decorations which beat many I've seen in the States. And there is all kinds of candy for sale. But, and said before, it costs too much for me.

In one window I saw a woman's coat (mother would never have thought of wearing it) marked 750 francs or \$150. Some price.

Good shoes were marked 200 francs or \$40. So you can see what the war has done to this country.

Six of us had a "feed" the other night in French Alsace. It cost us 30 francs or \$5 altogether. We had chicken soup with potatoes, carrots & macaroni in it. (The French always insist on your eating one thing at a time & each in its order). For the next course was French fried spuds & the last was chicken, boiled. And you could never guess how they boil a chicken. When it is placed on the table you find that the head & feet are still on & the insides are still "in". They always cook the heads of rabbits, too & can't see why we don't eat them. None for me.

We are getting pure white bread to-morrow for the first time in three months. Have been getting French war bread because it will keep & it takes some time to get rations to us at the front. It will taste like cake to us (the white bread, I mean).

Well, the war is over at last, & I am still "here". Don't know how soon as yet, but I expect to be back in the States soon. Three months maybe. Well, I shan't be sorry, but I wouldn't have missed what I have gone through for anything. Just at present is the most interesting part of my experience. Am certainly seeing some great sights.

Were ordered today to have a red flannel 1 put on our overcoats & blouses, on the left sleeve where it joins the shoulder. That's for the 1st Div. It's the first distinguishing mark we've had.

Got my first letter from Knox yesterday. He has been in action, too, but doubt if it was anything like I've seen. Would hate to have had to go through it, if it was. But it's all in the war or, as the French say, "Sil la Guerre".

Well, there isn't much else to say. Got mother's letter saying she was having some things sent from Paris.

Well, will close for this time.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
American E.F.
France.

Traben-Trarbach, Germany
Dec. 10, 1918.

Dear Mother:

Have only written home once since the signing of the Armistice but expect to be able to write at least once a week from now on. There has been no really good reason for not writing before, but I just kept putting it off. To tell the truth though, there was never much that I could write you, but suppose that you are always anxious to get my next letter just to know that I am all right. Well, the censor-ship is off far enough now so that I can tell every place that I've been and the dates & all that. In fact it's off far enough so that I can tell you all that I've wanted to. So, in my next letter will begin to tell you where I've been since I left New York City on July 13.

Have received the things from Paris. Got them Dec. 4th. The package contained: 1 sweater; 2 towels; 1 bottle ink; 2 cans jam; 1 box fruit cake; & 1 box sweet chocolate. There were thirty boys in the billet when I received the package so you can figure about how much of the stuff to eat I got. What I did get certainly tasted very good, though. I needed the towels more than anything else. Have been wearing the sweater all right, but you can figure how cold it is when we rarely wear our overcoats during the day time. It hasn't snowed once over here this winter, but has rained most of the time. They say it starts snowing in January. Guess I'll be over here then, so will find out for myself.

It gets dark now about four o'clock in the afternoon & light about a quarter to seven in the morning. We are much farther North than Nebraska, though, so I guess that explains it. Two days ago got the pair of sox you sent. Needed them badly. Also got the safety razor blades, which I can't use seeing as I lost my razor when my pack was stolen. Now have a Gillette. (Spelled wrong). At the same time received dad's letter written the day the armistice was signed.

Signed the payroll this month for all the money I have coming to me, which should be about \$120 of which I hope to save \$100. Many not be able to, though, as I owe \$7.50 & want to have my watch fixed, buy some writing paper & a knife. Will be able to save close to \$100 though.

Never realized how money values change until now. When we started into this country the banks gave you 80 marks in exchange for 100 francs. But, of course, the value of the marks is decreasing rapidly & the exchange is now 130 for 100 francs. Some drop. Of course, the value of French money is increasing, but not nearly so fast as the decrease of marks.

Heard to-day that our Infantry has entered Coblentz, our objective. It is 60 kilometers from here in a straight line & 120 by the river road, which we must take. Coblentz is situated at the junction of the Moselle & the Rhine.

The town or towns of Traben-Trarbach (Traben is on our side of the river) are situated on the Moselle. There is a big bridge across the river at this point. Bridges aren't any too frequent, but there are ferries in between.

The valley itself is very narrow. On our side the hills are about like those at home, but the other side is entirely different. Some of the boys claim that the hill there, which is close to the river's edge, is 1800 ft. high, but I would guess at it's being anywhere from 700 to 1000 & don't know but what I might be laughed at. Don't think so though. Went up on top yesterday & had some view, believe me. Looked straight down into the village street below & backed away from the edge almost immediately. It's too high for me. Could see for miles if the river didn't make a bend here. Will show you how we are placed by a diagram. (*Small map showing hills, river, bridges & valleys drawn on letter page). The hill I refer to is the one marked 1. At about the spot where the top of the 1 appears there is a monument farther to the right and much higher up in the ruins of an old castle. We went up by a path on the side of the hill farthest from the river, but came or rather slid down on the river side.

The hills are so steep here that they can't farm them so they are covered with vineyards.

You can judge how steep the hills are when I tell you that between the rows of grapes stakes are driven so that the grape pickers can stand up. It may sound strange, but it's so nevertheless.

Am billeted in the house of a German who was in the Army all four years. He sleeps in the next room. He is quite wealthy as he is a wine merchant & supplies all the cafes around here with wine. He has an enormous wine cellar. As one of the boys said, "The whole company couldn't make an impression on it in a year." Another wine merchant we ran across at Nittels claimed he had 39,000 litres of wine. Before the war he sold all of his wine to companies in New York.

Well, will close, but will write soon & tell where I have been.

Love to all,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.

American E.F.
France.

----, Germany
Dec. 13, 1918

Dear Mother:

Don't know the name of this burg so of course I can't put it down. At any rate it's a kind of tourist resort or something like that on the Moselle River, about 25 kilometers from Coblenz. We are to go there to-morrow. Don't know how long we will stay there nor where we will go when we are relieved. Expect to be up here for Christmas, though.

I told you in my last letter that I would tell you all that has happened since I left, so will start to-night. Don't suppose I will be able to write very much of it to-night though.

We left Camp Merritt at two o'clock in the morning of July 12th. Marched up hill & came down over the Palisades to Alpine Landing which we reached about day light. At the same time that we arrived two large river ferries arrived from up stream & we got on. Went down the river & got off at the dock at the end of 42nd street New York.

The Red Cross gave us a biscuit & a cup of coffee apiece. The boys were getting on the ship all the time, but it was noon before we got on. Our ship was a British boat, the S.S. Empress of Brittain. There were 5,000 of us on board, the 63rd coast artillery, a bunch of aviation workers & the medics. We left New York the next day, the 13th and went out past the statue of Liberty & by night were well out of sight of land.

Knox, Fritz, myself, & a few others got a job working down in the hold. We were detailed the first day & asked for the job. The stewards gave us jam, pickles, hot buns, oranges, apples & everything imaginable. I wasn't sea sick all the way over, but a lot of the boys were as we had quite a storm.

A battleship accompanied us the first two days & a sausage baloon the first, but both went back & we had no guard except our own guns until three days from port when the destroyers met us. There were 13 ships in the convoy. Fifteen started, but two turned back for some reason or other.

We landed at Liverpool, England on the 26th of July. Two days later we got on a train at Liverpool at eight o'clock in the morning & got off a Southampton at four the same afternoon. Went thru Oxford & Cambridge on the way. Stayed at Southampton awhile & got on a Channel steamer about four o'clock the afternoon of the 30th. Went down the river & by night were crossing the Channel. Slept on deck that night & woke up the morning of August 1st to find my-self in Cherbourg, France.

Have no more paper so will stop here for the present, but will continue in my next letter.

Haven't had any mail for quite a few days because we are always on the move & of course our post office has to move with us & can't do much business.

Haven't been paid yet but expect to be soon. Owe about ten dollars, but will be able to save most of the rest.

Well, must close for this time. Hope to get a letter soon.
Love to every body,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
American E.F.
France.

Hohr, Germany.
Dec. 21, 1918.

Dear Mother: Well we are across the Rhine at last. We crossed at Coblenz at 6:30 A.M. on the 14th. We are about ten kilometers from Coblenz, but are connected to it by street car line. Until yesterday were billeted in a kind of opera house, but are now in a private home. Sleep in the living room. There is a stove, electric lights, & city water, so it isn't so bad.

As I said in my last letter I signed the pay roll, but for some reason or other we haven't been paid yet. Don't know why we haven't been, but I guess we'll get our money in time. But, of course, I haven't any money and haven't had for quite awhile. I owe about ten dollars & would like to pay it back.

Well, last letter, I started to tell you where I had been. I quit by saying that we landed in France August 1st. I've looked it up since & find it was July 30th instead. We left Cherbourg July 31st and arrived at St. Aignon on Aug. 1st. From there we hiked a few kilometers to Thesee where we stayed until Aug. 14th. There Fritz, Knox & I were split up. From there we started South through Dijon (I got a letter from Miss Morrison a few days ago) until we were farther South than Switzerland. Then we turned east & finally north & traveled up along the Swiss border to Toul. It was pretty hilly along the border there. Doubled back at Toul & landed at the rail head for the sector on the 16th. That night we marched to field hospital No. 2 (this division) Left there in trucks on the 19th & joined A.C. 12 at Jezainville on the 20th. This was on a "quiet" sector & there were civilians in the town even though it wasn't

very far from the lines. The division was relieved by the 90th division on the 23rd & we went back to Punerot. It was there that I wrote you about the British Aviation field where I saw those big bombing planes. The field was about three kilometers from Punerot & they had nine big bombers.

While at Punerot they transferred a bunch of the old men to the 26th infantry infirmary & a few days later they read off a list of 30 men who were to go to the 26th as litter bearers. All of the new men were to go.

The company left Punerot Sept. 3rd and we pitched our tents the next morning in an open field. We were right beside a big canal which they say runs thru part of France, Germany, & Belgium. Just where we were it crossed some river. I don't know what one. Anyway it was run over the river thru a big concrete affair about 20 feet above the water. The water in the canal was pretty deep.

Well, we left there Sept. 8 & 15 of us were left at the 26th regiment infirmary at a small town 6 km. from Boucq(?) on Sept. 9th. The other 15 went to the three battalion infirmaries. We were by the canal here, but at this place it tunneled through a high hill. When we left there we hiked thru the tunnel & walked from dark until after day light the next morning. It rained all night long & when we arrived we had to pitch our tents. While there I was sent to the 1st battalion infirmary. (By the way Major Roosevelt was commander of the 1st battalion. He is now a Lieutenant Colonel but is still with the 26th.)

On the night of the eleventh we moved up to Beaumont, just back of Seicheprey. At one o'clock the next morning all of the big guns opened up & the barrage lasted for four hours. At five o'clock the dough boys went over the top & we were in the St. Mihiel drive. We were just at the right end of old Mount Sec itself. Mount Sec was quite a German stronghold & was said to be all undermined with concrete tunnels. I went over the top of it on the way back & it was true all right. It was some hill.

We had quite a job keeping up with the doughboys. Had to keep on the move all the time they went so fast. We went up thru Nonsard & were near Hatton Chatel when ordered back into the woods. Were relieved on the 15th & laid in German rest camps until the 19th. On that night we hiked back over Mount Sec, back thru Xivraz(?) to ----I've forgotten the name of the town. (From here on I've lost track of most of the places)

From here we hiked about ten km. (In daylight for the first time) to a field where some French trucks picked us up & carried us thru Ligny(?) to a town up behind the Verdun front. We stayed there a couple of days & hiked all one night to another burg nearer the front. Stayed there a couple of more days & hiked about 35 km. to a small town 8 km. from Verdun. Were

there over night & then get French trucks again & went as close to the Front as they take troops. Tried to sleep in the rain the last couple of hours of that night but didn't get rested very much. That morning we started for the fighting lines. Passed the trenches when the 35th Div. went over the top & followed them up to the town of Scheppy. Stayed there until dark & then it took us until two o'clock in the morning to hike about 5 km. to Very on account of the traffic. Just after we left Scheppy it was gassed & horns were going allover as a warning.

At Very put on my mask for the first time in real gas. We were just marching up the other side of the valley (gas stays in the holes) & didn't hear a sound until someone shouted "Gas!" Like every other recruit I had on a pair of gloves & my cap on under my helmet. I managed tho. The third man ahead of me got hit in the foot by a piece of the gas shell & went to the hospital. A gas shell doesn't make much noise, but I didn't know that then.

Stayed on the hill outside Very a couple of days & were shelled quite a bit of the time. The Germans had an observation balloon in plain view & we got shelled every time we went to meals. Saw three kitchens get wiped out just one, two, three. It certainly was quick work. Well, I moved up with a(?) battalion and this time went over the top in the Argonne Forest.

Well, will stop my "journey" there for this time. Am enclosing a division citation for the Argonne.

Last night got three letters. One was from John (Sept.), one from Grandpa M. (Sep.) & one from you (Oct.).

Got two to-night. One from Spiegel Miner(?) (Sept.) & from Hught (Oct.). It's awfully hard to answer letters. Either haven't got time or paper ("Borrowed" this).

Well, will close for this time. Tell Elsie Mae I'll write her as soon as I can.

Love to all,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
American E.F.
France.

Hohr, Germany
December 22, 1918

Dear John: It was only the night before last that I received your letter which was written in Sept. Don't know what was

wrong as the address was correct, but suppose it just got side-tracked some place. Tell Spiegel that I only got her Sept. letter last night. Also tell she & Mars * (Marseline Lewis) that it has been impossible for me to answer their letters. Have been broke for six months now so couldn't buy any paper & there has been no Y. near where I could get any for nothing. What I have been able to get I've used to write home, & as you know, that hasn't been as often as I should. Well, there's a Y. in town here & I can get some paper I think. I have between 25 & 30 letters to answer. Was just counting them up.

We're across the Rhine, about ten km. from Coblenz. Crossed at 6:30 the morning of the 14th. There is street car service between here & Coblenz. Don't know the population of this town, but its fairly large. The principal industry seems to be the making of pottery. They haul the clay from the pits down to the center of town on the car track, where it is loaded on to wagons & taken to the potteries. The clay is a bluish white (nearer to white, though) & is like glue, in that it sticks together. It's not runny though. Well, anyway, they make everything from clay pipes to vases & such. You can get a clay pipe for the asking & lots of the boys even have steins & such things which were given to them.

Well, I don't suppose you care much about those things so will tell you a little about the Front.

I was up with the doughboys for six weeks. The first fight I was in was the St. Mihiel drive. When the drive started I was at Beaumont just in front of Mount Sec. Mount Sec is a high hill, very steep, which sits alone out on the plain. As I understand, the French have tried to take it several times, but the longest they ever held it was 20 minutes and their losses then were said to be awful. The hill is all undermined with concrete dugouts & was quite a German stronghold. The first division went around the right end of it & I guess the French went around the left or upper end. Well, we captured 17,000 prisoners & lots of guns & supplies. The doughboys went so fast that we had to hike all the time to keep up with them. It was some job believe me. We were relieved up near Hatton Chatel. I was with the 1st battalion of the 26th infantry at that time. Major Roosevelt was battalion commander but was then in Paris. He is now a Lieutenant-Colonel & is back with the 26th.

We rested awhile after the St. Mihiel drive which started Sept. 12th & then went into the fighting in the Argonne forest. That was some scrap believe me. It kept us busy dodging machine gun bullets & shells. Was sniped at more than once, but thank goodness I didn't get hit. Saw a bunch of good air scraps up there. Nine Germans came over & three Americans dropped out of the clouds, got three Germans, & got away before the Boche knew what was coming off. One German brought his machine down all

right, but the other two went up in smoke. The pilots & observers jumped & were killed of course. One of them had a parachute, but it didn't open up properly & he came down faster than his machine.

Was relieved when we came out of that fight & came back to the company. The division was relieved by the 42nd.

My last time at the Front was in the march on Sedan. Eight of us went into Moryzon (don't know how to spell it, but that's the way to pronounce it) There wasn't a soul in the burg, but it was full of supplies & the Germans were throwing a regular barrage on it. Well, we went into town, but it got too hot for us & we crawled into a cellar. A big shell came along, lit outside, broke every pane of glass there was left (weren't many), & the floor seemed to rise about a foot. Fortunately the shell failed to explode. We didn't waste any time getting out of town though.

The division was relieved two days before the Armistice was signed. When the Army of occupation started into Germany we were right there. We went up thru Luxemburg & then followed the Moselle thru Germany & are here just a few miles from that rivers intersection with the Rhine which we have crossed.

Have seen a lot of little trinkets I would like to bring home, but as I am broke I guess I'm out of luck.

Don't know when we will be back to the States & haven't any way of finding out.

Be sure & write.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729
Am. E.F.
France.

Dec. 23, 1918
Hohr, Germany.

Dear little sister:

I was going to write to you & Charles before this, but was too busy to do much writing. Tell mama that I got the Christmas box yesterday afternoon, and that the candy was the best thing I've had seen (*since) I've been over here. Everything in the box was all right.

When I come home I'll try & bring something for you & Charles. Don't know what yet, but I'll get it. The little girls over here haven't very many good things to eat. The (*they) have potatoes & soup most of the time. The bread is

black & tastes sour. It is heavy as a rock, too. They don't have any butter, but have a little jell. They make cookies sometimes, but they can't get much sugar & the cookies aren't very good. They hardly ever get any candy or cake.

Some of the boys & girls wear wooden shoes when it is muddy, & some of them always wear them when they go outdoors. There other shoes have wooden bottoms & have hobnails in them. They aren't very warm.

It snowed here last night for the first time this winter. It isn't very cold yet. We drill without our overcoats. The day after tomorrow is Christmas & I'd like to send you a present but I can't. I'll have to bring it when I come, I guess.

I don't think we'll have much of a Christmas dinner. Wish I could be home for dinner.

Dec. 24th. Didn't get to finish your letter last night. Tell mama I got a bunch of papers this afternoon, and a letter dated July 18th. The cook is making some pumpkin pies to-day so I guess we'll have a Christmas dinner after all.

Well, there isn't much more to write. The sun has been out to-day for the first time since I can remember. Can send you a picture of myself in a few days, I think.

Must close for this time.

Your brother,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
Am. E.F.
France.

Dec. 25, 1918
Hohr, Germany.

Dear folks:

Got your Christmas box on the 22nd & believe me, that home-made candy was about the best thing I've had since I've been over here. Took some pictures, but the photographer didn't know how to handle the film & spoiled all but three. Don't know how the three will come out when printed. He's to have some done today.

It snowed here for the first time the night of the 22nd. I was on guard. It was all melted by morning though. It started snowing last night after we had gone to bed, & there is over an inch of snow on the ground now so it seems more like Christmas. The people here celebrate Christmas two days, the 25th & 26th. They went to church at 4 o'clock this morning. When they came

back we had to drink coffee with them & eat cake. The cake is made of this old black flour, but it tasted pretty good just the same. They had it covered with sugar. They gave each of us a clay pipe & a cigarette holder. There are four of us staying here.

The company is going to have dinner at two o'clock & we have no supper to-night. It is now a quarter after eleven so I have a couple of hours before we eat. Don't know what we are going to have to-day except that I saw the cook making some pumpkin pies. Will finish this letter after dinner & tell you what we have. Hope to get some mail to-day. Having been getting all kinds of July, August, & Sept. mail lately & a few later letters to. Got the Nov. 14th papers too.

Well, there's a regular rough-house on so will close till after dinner.

3 o'clock. Just finished dinner. Had pork, mashed spuds & gravy, sauerkraut, pumpkin pie, bread, butter & coffee. Pork we don't have very often. We get fresh beef all the time, but no pork. The beef comes from the States & is frozen hard as a rock. When we have pork we have to buy it.

I ate the sauerkraut today, which as you know, I would never do at home. It wasn't so bad. I've gotten now, so that I can eat almost anything.

We are to get some cakes & bar chocolate at five o'clock It'll certainly be welcome.

Some mail came in his morning, but there was none for me. May get some this afternoon or to-night, though. Am certainly hoping so.

It has stopped snowing at last, but it's pretty dark out even now. Think it will start snowing again pretty soon. Doesn't show much signs of letting up. It would be an ideal day for Christmas in the States, but over here it doesn't seem so much like that day.

Heard to-day that the Division is to be on the alert, ready to move at a minutes notice. Don't know if it's true or not, or whether it's true that we are to leave on the 28th. Am hoping so, of course, & so is everybody else, but of course we hear nothing but rumors. Still I have a sneaking idea that we will be in the States before many more months have passed.

Would like to be discharged in time time to go to school next fall, but am rather doubtful on that score.

If I don't get to go to school next year I don't know what I'll do, as we have been on the move so much that I hate to stay in one place. All the other boys, or at least most of them, are the same way. If I get out next summer though I guess I can stick thru school though. I don't know whether to finish high school or go to college as a sophomore. If I don't get back for next fall I certainly shan't go to High.

One of the boys is trying to tell the old man about the U.S. Neither can speak the other's language, but they manage. The talk started when the old man wanted to know what the pumpkin pie was. The two of them are making all kinds of motions & noises now, but it works all right.

The family has a boy about twelve or thirteen. All the games he got for Christmas are typical of the German games. They are all educational. They are played in such a way that you have to add numbers or multiply numbers, and sometimes even subtract, and the kids are certainly good at figuring.

The man of the family where we are staying is the foreman of a pottery. He has all kinds of pots here that he made himself. The men in the factories make almost perfect pots from a lump of clay in less than five minutes. They're awfully fast.

The potteries here are already getting ready for the American trade, which I don't know whether they'll get or not. The family here gave us each a clay pipe this morning. It is made of red clay & has some people & a dog on it. On one side it says "The Whole Dam Family", and on the other what is now used instead of "made in Germany". It says, "Made Abroad."

Well, I can't think of much else & it's getting almost too dark to see to write, although it's only half-past three. Will close hoping to see you all within a few months.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
Am. E.F.
France.

Hohr, Germany.
Dec. 27, 1918.

Dear Mother:

Just received your letter of Nov. 24, and thought I would write as I have some paper. Can't write very well as I cut my thumb & have it wrapped up. Guess you can make it out if the Lieutenant who censors it can. He probably cusses every time he has to censor one of my letters anyway. Maybe he's getting used to it by this time, though.

The only pictures I can take are of the different boys. Am not allowed to take any others. Even these must be against a solid back-ground like a stone-wall or side of a house. Am not allowed to send film thru the mails so can't send negatives home.

It is snowing here again tonight. The roads have been a solid sheet of ice since Christmas day. Don't know whether they'll get any better from now on or not. It's cold enough now to wear an overcoat most of the time but isn't bad at that. Hope it doesn't get very much colder, though.

I would not like to live in any of these countries over here. Don't know a man in the A.E.F. who would. Haven't met any yet & don't expect to. I don't like the climate at all. There are also other things I don't like.

While the war was going on we were up at the (front) most of the time & of course didn't have any of the things you mention. This town is the first place we've been where there has been any of them since I joined this outfit.

We get plenty of time off. We drill from 9 to 12 every morning & that's all. We can't do much of anything except read & write. The rest of the time we just monkey around but manage to have a fairly good time.

You ask about the "gassed" men. I have seen a good many. There are four of us sleeping in this room. Two of them are entitled to wound stripes for gas. I have smelled quite a bit of gas myself. Not enough to hurt me any though. It made my nose, throat & eyes burn at the time & made me hoarse for a few days, but that is all. One of the boys in the Co. couldn't see for six weeks & was burned quite a bit, but is back with us now, apparently as good as ever.

When a gas patient comes in the officer who attends to him can tell every time whether he is faking or not. There are the symptoms of a gassed man. His eyes are inflamed & water a good deal; his pulse isn't normal; and he vomits. If he has these symptoms he goes to the hospital; if not, to the lines.

In the Argonne forest I wore my gas mask a good deal, but the longest time without having it off was two hours. You would smell gas most of the time, but there wasn't enough to make us put on our masks.

Well, there isn't much to write about. Went over to watch one of the potters make some vases. Timed him & it took 3 ½ minutes to make a completed vase from a lump of clay. Pretty fast work, seeing as he makes them by hand.

Well, must close for this time.

Love to all,
Ralph.

Pvt. R. M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
Am. E.F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Dec. 31, 1918.

Dear Dad:

To-morrow is New Years & to start 1919 out right am enclosing a money order for fifty (\$50) dollars, which I hope reaches you.

As we are to be paid again soon, I thought I would wait until then, & send the other fifty, as I don't care to be without money any longer even for a short time. We stood muster this morning & signed the payroll right after dinner. We are to be paid by the 7th of each month from now on.

I received my back pay about three days ago. We were paid in German money & I got 1033 marks. I had a few debts to pay & that cut me down quite a bit or I should have sent \$100 home this time. One of the sergeants was going over to Montabour this morning, and as the post office is over there, I have him 500 marks & told him to get me the money order for \$50. I had figured it out at 455 marks for \$50 but he gave me back 50 marks so I guess it was only 450.

I still have an even 500 marks in my pocket, but am going to wait until we are paid before I send the other \$50.

We are to take an 18 km. hike with full field equipment Friday, and as the hills here are almost straight up & down, I'm afraid we are going to be pretty much all in. I've never fallen out yet, though, & don't intend to this time.

Am sending Mother some post card views of the country so you can tell from them what it is like. Must close as it is bed time.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729.
Am. E.F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Jan. 7, 1919

Dear Mother:

Still here, and liable to be here for some time to come. The Sanitary Train is getting out a paper called "The Sanitarian", (I don't think much of the name) and I will send you a copy as soon as I get one.

An order came in some time ago saying that examinations would be held for West Point. Two hundred men out of the A.E.F. are going to be selected by competitive examination. Brewer decided to try for it. The exams are to be held March 18th. I am helping him with his Algebra & Geometry. We put an hour on Algebra & two on Geometry every afternoon. I certainly hope he is one of the lucky two hundred.

There hasn't been much doing this week, until to-day. We go out for a football game every morning, and the company goes out again in the afternoon, while Brewer & I are wrestling with mathematics.

The First & Second Divisions had a football game yesterday, the Second winning 6 to 0. The First lost on a fumble, but those who saw the game said we had the best team.

All we had this morning was a lecture, as the wind was blowing the snow quite a bit; and it was pretty cold. Brewer & I started for the office about 1:30, & heard somebody blowing fire call. We looked down town, and there was a peach of a fire all right. We went up to the office, & Brewer told the First Sergeant about it. Our bugler blew fire call, we lined up, and went down double time. Had to form bucket lines, but got the fire out all right.

We came back from the fire & got paid about four o'clock. Got francs again, instead of marks.

There is a Divisional boxing bout on, to get the Divisional champions. The Sanitary Train is pitted against the First Machine Gun Battalion, next Wednesday. The eliminations for the Sanitary Train came off to-night. There are eight companies in the Sanitary Train, and there are boxers of from different weights. Three out of the four from the Sanitary Train are from this company. The other is from Field Hospital 13. That is the result of the eliminations to-night.

Well, there isn't much more to write about. I still have plenty of cooties, despite frequent attempts to get rid of them. By the way, I haven't had any mail for twelve days now. I suppose it will all come in a bunch, when it does come.

I sent you a card the other day, furnished by the Government, telling where I am, the state of my health, etc. I suppose you have received numerous letters from me at this place; but it was compulsory, so I filled one out and sent it along.

The days are getting longer, now. It is light a little earlier in the morning, & darker a little later at night. This has been the mildest winter I've ever seen, believe me, but they say that February is the worst month in the year. I guess it won't be very bad, though. At least, I don't expect to have my ears frosted or anything like that. Haven't even had my ears really cold yet, and have only used that helmet once, when I was

on guard. I almost roasted in it that time; but was sure glad I had it, just the same.

Well, guess I'll have to close. Am feeling fine, & suppose every body at home is all right.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Jan. 10, 1919
Hillscheid, Germany

Dear John:

As your birthday is the 27th of this month, would like to have this letter reach you by that date, but guess that is impossible. The quickest time any letter has made coming to me is twenty days, and it is only seventeen until the 27th, so there isn't much chance of this reaching you by that date.

I have a little present for you, but am not going to try to send it, as I don't think it would get through. It is an Iron Cross which I managed to get. Am going to carry it in my pocket book until I get home, so ask me for it the first time you see me.

We take a six or seven kilometer hike every morning. Just got in about fifteen minutes ago. Doesn't bother me much as we are used to it by this time.

I wish you would write me all the news about the High School, and also of the boys who are left around town. I guess there aren't many left, though.

Mother doesn't tell very much that is really news. She has other things in her mind. I get more news from Mars' letters than from anybody else. Hope she doesn't stop writing or I won't know anything that is happening at home.

Say, John, I want you to do something for me if you will. I want you to go down to Jones's bookstore and find two or three magazines that have good short stories in them. Don't pick out magazines with continued stories if you can help it. Take these magazines, roll them inside of a Saturday Evening Post, & send them along. I want you to do it every week, and always the same magazines. Be sure that the ones you pick are good ones before you start sending them. Keep track of how much they cost you, and of the postage, & write & tell me how much it amounts to, at the end of every month. As soon as I get your letter saying how

much it is, I'll send the money to you. Do this for me, if it isn't too much bother, because we don't get any too much to read. If I want them stopped, or we go back to some place where we can get plenty of reading matter, I'll write & let you know.

Well, I've some other letters to write this morning so will close. Address the magazines just as I have the address below written.

Your brother,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Co. No. 12 A.P.O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Jan. 11, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Am enclosing a money order for twenty-five dollars which I hope you receive. I sent you one for fifty dollars some time ago, and suppose you have it by this time. Will send at least twenty-five more next month, and will try to send a little every month from now on, but am not sure that I will be able to. I would have sent more than twenty-five this time, but have loaned quite a bit to Brewer, who came all the way from Logan with me. His service record was lost, the same as mine; but it came a few days ago, so he will be paid for this month and all the preceding months, on our next pay day.

The company had its picture taken to-day, and if the pictures are good I intend to take a couple of them. They will cost about four marks apiece.

Bought an Iron Cross the other day, which I have promised to John for a birthday present. Am not going to try to send it home through the mail, though. Such things as that are all that we spend our money for over here. We do have a commissary, though, which is run by the Chaplains, aided by three of the Sanitary train men. It is pretty hard to get supplies, but we had some milk chocolate the other day and some cookies to-day. Have sardines, candles, and a few things like that most of the time, which helps some. Still, there isn't much to spend your money for. There is plenty of tobacco, and many of the boys down quite a bit of wine and beer; but, as I neither smoke nor drink I'm not getting rid of any money in that direction. Tell

mother the last letter I got was dated Dec. 3, & only the first page was there.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. E. F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Jan. 16, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just received your letter of Dec. 10th, and was pretty glad to get it, as its the first letter of recent date I've had from you for some time.

Yesterday I got an envelope with two December papers, a pair of sox, pair of wristlets, & a pillow. Was hoping there would be a couple of Hersheys in it, but was disappointed there. The envelope was torn open, and looked as tho someone had gone thru it, but I guess they didn't take anything.

Got a letter and some papers from Aunt Gretta the other day. Also got a letter from Dorothy Maggard, which was written in Sept.

Don't know what we are going to do for sure, but from the looks of things, we'll be here for some time.

"The latest" in rumors is that drafted & duration of war men will be mustered out, if they can give a good reason. Don't think there is much in it tho.

Have never heard of any Reynolds in this company, and can find no one who ever has. He may be in Field Hospital 12.

This is some mild winter over here. Haven't had any snows lately, but it rained all day yesterday. I was on guard, but it didn't bother me as I had the post inside, guarding prisoners.

For a couple of days I tried to wait until the sun got over head so that I could take some pictures, but the sun refuses to rise over half way and then goes back. It seems to rise in the southeast & sets in the southwest. There is always a twenty foot shadow on the north side of the house.

Have had four lessons in short hand so far, and find it not nearly so dull as I had supposed. In fact I'm beginning to like it. Hope you have received the cards I sent by the time you get this.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729.
Am. Ex. F.
France.

Jan. 19, 1919
Hillscheid, Germany

Dear Dad:

Received your letter of Dec. 25, and one from Mars of the 24th, yesterday afternoon. Got one of Mother's, dated about the 10th, a couple of days ago.

Aside from the usual run of things, there is nothing doing over here. On week days we get up at seven, have breakfast about a quarter after, and have until eight-thirty to clean up. Either take a hike until ten-thirty, or have a lecture on motors. Have dinner at twelve, and fall in at one for a couple of lectures & diseases, etc. Stand retreat at four, with supper right afterwards. Go to bed anytime between six and nine. (It gets dark at 4 remember). On Saturday have inspection at 9:00, & get the rest of the day off. Off all day Sunday. Once a week, we get kitchen guard, to keep the squareheads (and also the soldiers) out of the stuff to eat. Are on for four hours. First relief (two men) 6-10, 2nd 10-2, 3rd 2-6. We also get town guard once a week. On for twenty-four hours, two hours on, four off. Six posts, three reliefs to a post. Have been on twice here. Got No. 6 post the first time. That is the railroad station. Second time got No. 2 post, which is the guard house. It is the only inside post. It rained all the time while I was on, so I considered myself lucky in getting it. Have to guard the prisoners & take them to meals.

The Recreation Room is getting into better shape, thanks to the Chaplain. Get such things as candy pretty often, and can get things we need most of the time. There are all kinds of magazines there which may be taken out for twenty-four hours. There is also a bunch of good books, which belong to the A. F. A. They may be taken out for seven days.

There is always something going on there in the evening now. On Sunday evening, of course, is church. On Mondays & Thursdays from 4:45 to 5:15 is Shorthand Class. I have been going to these classes. The Gregg system is being taught, and our instructor taught the system for two years on the outside. I can see right now that its going to be more a matter of practice than anything else.

On Tuesday & Thursday evenings there are German classes from 5 to 6. On Wednesday is choir practice & on Saturday from 5 to 6 a discussion class. Different outfits can put on shows during the week, after six o'clock. We've had four or five, so far. Last night we had the "Cantigny Troupe." The bunch got together for the first time at that place, last spring. Its made up of fellows from the 28th, 26th & the Signal Corps. They are sent out by G1 (headquarters of the Division) to the different outfits. The boys are excused from all duties.

By the way, I was entitled to my first gold service chevron on the 13th. Hope I'm not over here long enough to get two. The old men in the outfit get their third one the first of February. Some of the outfits in the Division got their third one a couple of months ago. As you probably know, this Division was the first one over here, or, as one of the papers put it, "The 42nd Division was the first Division to reach France, except for the First Regular Army Division." It was also the first division to go into the trenches, up on the Toul front. I think you remember when the Germans captured that first bunch up there. It was also the first division in a battle, that at Cantigny.

The division has been in five battles in the seven months before the armistice was signed, and was in this "quiet" sector. The five battles were: Cantigny, Soissons, St. Mihiel, Argonne Forest, & the March on Sedan. I was in the last three. We have three citations from General Pershing. This gives us the Croix de Guerre, but not the shoulder cord, or fouragerre, as that is given only by some French council.

Two of the Roosevelt boys are in the Division, one a Lieutenant-Colonel in the 26th Infantry, and the other a Captain in the 7th Field Artillery. George Pattuls(?), who writes for the "Post" is an officer, I think of the 18th but am not sure. Pershing himself used to be Captain of the 18th, and he marched into the city of Luxemburg at their head.

We hear rumors every day, about when we are going home and discharge, and things like that; but have heard nothing definite as yet. Of course everyone says that he is going to put in for a discharge the first chance he gets, and all that, but there are a lot of them who are going to change their minds and re-up.

According to our latest paper (on the 16th) they expect to have peace declared by the first of April. I hope so. Don't know what they'll do with us then. The Government seems to be getting the best of the Spartoints(?) in Berlin, so things look a little more promising in that direction. Don't think we'll have to go to Russia either, as some of the boys feared we would. Of course, you never can tell, tho.

Am feeling pretty good, now-days. The fact of the matter is, that I had the diarrhea pretty bad for four months; but got

over it the last of December, and have gained about ten pounds since. The French climate didn't agree with me at all.

Well, there isn't anything more of enough importance to put down, so I guess I'll have to stop. Have a couple more letters to write this morning and its ten o'clock now. Guess I can write them before dinner, tho.

Your son,

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart

Amb. Co. No. 12.

A. P. O. 729

Am. Ex. F.

France

Hillscheid, Germany.

Jan. 25, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Well, we are still here, as you see. Our "latest rumor" is, that we'll be across the Rhine and headed for home by the 4th of February. Wish I could believe it.

The outfits in the Sanitary Train had to fill out classification cards yesterday, telling their occupations and such things. I was on city(?) guard so didn't get to fill one out. I suppose there cards are for classification for demobilisation when we do get back to the States.

As I said, I was on guard yesterday. Went over to Montabaur in the morning. Took some prisoners over. We got two loads of wood, two trailers, and a bunch of spare parts. Got hung up in town for a while. The 5th Field Artillery had a parade on, with their band and all the rest of it. We got back just at noon.

It has turned cold lately, and is colder than it has been so far this winter. Even at that, I don't believe a thermometer would register any lower than fifteen above. So you see it isn't what we would call very cold at home.

Have had letters from both Knox & Fritz lately. Fritz is at Verdun, and has been there for some time. All he does now is play in the band, and is excused from all other duties. Knox is at Semur, France, just 70 km. west of Dijon. He said he went there twice to see his Aunt. The first time she was there, but the second time had been sent to some other canteen.

There has been talk lately of passes being issued back to France, and if they are issued, I'm going to try to get one back there. I want to see if I can't go to some leave area near Knox or Fritz, and have them come to the same place.

Must close for this time.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Jan. 30, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got your letter of Jan. 5 yesterday afternoon. Haven't been getting much mail lately. Hope I'll get more in the next few days.

The 5th Field Artillery Band gave a concert at the Recreation Room a couple of nights ago. I certainly enjoyed it, and think all of the other boys did also. A Mr. Atkinson gave a lecture up there last night, but I didn't stay. Came down & indulged in a cootie hunt instead. Didn't find a one, but can feel them to-night. There must be a million.

Am on K.P. again; but it's a joke now, compared with what it used to be. We are finished every night by five o'clock. Are to have pancakes in the morning, so I'll be there. Had a candy issue to-night, half a pound of chocolates to a man. They go pretty good.

The top said to-day that some of the men are to be transferred; but I understand that they are to be some of the fellows from our last replacement, so I don't think there is any danger of my leaving the company. Hope not, at any rate.

Haven't signed the pay-roll this month. Usually sign it about the 28th, and get paid about the 3rd. I understand that we won't be paid in German money again; and an order has been issued, saying that the P.O. will not accept German money after the 31st. Don't know what the idea is, but suppose there is method in their madness.

If I can get a pass to Coblenz after pay-day I'm going to get a few more souvenirs. Will get small things that I can carry, and which won't take up room.

Were re-issued gas masks the other day. Don't know what for. Must close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729. 1st Div.

American Ex. F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Feb. 3, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Under separate cover am enclosing some pictures of the company, and an issue of the "Stars & Stripes". I didn't "take" very well in the picture, but want the pictures of the company more than anything else, anyway.

By reading the "Stars & Stripes" you can tell what it is, but as they use many A.E.F. terms, I will explain a few of them.

In the first column I have checked "slum". That is the "official" name for stew. In the Infantry, if the mess sergeant has a "grough on", or can't think of anything else to feed the doughboys, (he usually can't two meals out of three) he puts all his rations into on pot, boils it, and it's "slum". If a soldier comes home and sees slum on the table in sight of two years, he's already vowed to leave home.

The second check mark in the column is a "goldfish", or salmon. Whenever you don't get slum for dinner, you get "goldfish" balls.

The third check is at "corned-willie", or "corned-bill". In the States it's called corned beef. It is about as well liked as slum, and is always your emergency ration at the Front. Now days the mess sergeants camouflage it for fear of being mobbed.

The third column may need a little explaining. Le Mans is the place where the outfits are "cootied-up" before being sent home. There are accomodations for two divisions, or nearly 90,000 men at a time.

The first check in column three is at C.O., which means Commanding Officer.

The second check is at "top kicker" which means the top sergeant or first sergeant of a company.
In the fourth column Q M C stands for Quartermaster Corps
In the fifth column G. O. stands for General Order & G.H.Q. for General Headquarters. In the same column S.O.S. is Service of Supplies, and includes all the Army in France not in the combat divisions.

In the sixth column M.P. is Military Police, and A.W.O.L. absent without leave.

On page two, column two, O.R.C. is Officer's Reserve Corps, and "Sam Browne" is the belt worn by officers on the outside of the blouse.

In the fifth column, U.S.M.C. is United States Marine Corps.

On page three, column one, "two-stripe men" means men with two service stripes, or one year over here. In the same column "cramps in his dogs" means cramps in his legs.

On page four, column four, "Spad" is the name of a French aeroplane. The Americans used a large number of them.

In column five, F.H. is Field Hospital, and A.O. Army of Occupation.

In the last column Am.Tn. is Ammunition Train.

On page five, column one, "tin hat", of course, is a helmet, and the "arrow shaped stripe" a service stripe. O.D. is olive drab.

In column two, F.W.D. is a four wheel drive truck.

In column three, the "brig" is the guardhouse.

In the fourth column they use the word "bird-seed". That is what rice is usually called.

In column five, "indoor sports" are usually poker & craps. Also a "C.C.Pill", as they have it here, is a compound cathartic, If they don't paint you with iodine when you go on sick roll, they give you a c.c., or so the doughboys think, no matter what is wrong.

On page six, column one, Semur is the town where Knox is now stationed.

On page eight, column one, St. Aignon is the place where we landed after coming from Cherbourg. From there we went to Thesee.

Well, I guess that about covers the papers.

There are to be 200 men taken from the Army to enter West Point. The exams come off March 18th. Brewer went to Coblenz to-day to see if he can get some books, especially on Algebra & Plane Geometry. He expects to take the examination, if he can get the books. I'm going to to be his "teacher". Some teacher.

Must close. There hasn't been any first-class mail for about a week.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. **No. 12**
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. F.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.

Feb. 12, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just received your letter of ---well, I don't know what date. It was begun on Jan. 13, & mailed on the 20th, according to the post-mark. It is the first letter I've had from home for two weeks. The only mail I've had in that time is a letter apiece from Knox & Fritz. They both want me to get them some Iron Crosses. Fritz wanting as many as I can get him. Wonder what he thinks I am, a bank? Still I guess I'll be able to get two for him.

I don't know how much I weigh as I haven't been weighed since I've been across. It isn't bothering me much, I know that. I've got other things to worry about. Besides, the scales over here use kilograms instead of pounds, and it is too much work to figure it out. The fact of the matter is, though, that I've never even thought about getting weighed.

Have never even heard of the accidents you speak about. Besides, the war was a long ways from here. These people were never within hearing of the guns. They are now, tho. The artillery around here has been practicing the last few days. Some of the guns are just over the hill, which isn't far, and when they go off it just about shakes the house down. One of the women here was scared to death the first day. She thought the Americans were shelling the towns. Wonder how she'd liked to have been one of the French women? If I could speak German, I sure would have asked her.

The sun came out Saturday for the first time in practically a month. Since then it has been out every day and there is not a cloud in the sky. The days are already getting longer. It is now light when we get up at 6:45 and it doesn't get dark until after five. It is warm enough so we don't need our overcoats at all. In fact, we have needed them only a few days this winter, and they say that the worst of winter is already past. If we ever had as mild a winter as this at home, we would think something was wrong, believe me. Still I'm not kicking on this kind of a winter.

You say that you ordered a two pound box of candy sent in that package from Paris. I did get $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of sweet chocolate, but that was all the candy I received. I got the ink, but there was no fountain pen. Also got the towels, sweater & two $\frac{1}{2}$ pound cans of jam. The sweater had a hole in it when I received it, but I managed to fix it. If I remember correctly I sold the ink, as I had no use for it. The towels are doing duty every day, as is the sweater. It comes in handy, especially when we go out to play football.

So far I have received two pair of sox, a helmet & knitted cap. Have used the sox alright, but have never had a chance to

use the helmet. Tried it one night, when on guard, and just about roasted. Well, will finish after supper as it is time for retreat.

Have had supper, so will finish. Brewer has put in for West Point, and I am giving him a review in the different subjects required. The exams come off Mch. 18th, so I've got a steady job until that date. He was to go to Coblenz, Monday, to study under a Major there. All the men from the Army of Occupation who are taking the exam were to go, but the order was changed, and he is still here. Don't know now, whether he will go at all or not.

An order came in yesterday saying that any officer or enlisted man who had had at least two years of college, could go to Paris to study in the Universities there. They are to be there four months, according to the Herald. Wish it was two years High School instead of college. One man in the outfit took it up, I believe; but don't know just who. I'm hoping just now that I get back in time to go to school next fall, but I'm rather doubtful.

Things, according to the papers, don't look any too good just now. They say the Germans have not carried out the Armistice agreements. Hope they get things settled soon.

What most of us want, now, is to have Peace declared, so that we can start back. The Chicago Tribune (Paris edition) has at the top now days, "Get the boys home toot sweet", which expresses our thoughts as well as anything can. Still I guess we will get home in good time.

Brewer brought down a geography (*Geographic) yesterday, and I was showing the pictures to the Mrs. & the kids. Came to a picture of coffee growing (they spell it kaffee) and she said that the last coffee they had was April, a year ago. They make their coffee of burnt barley nowadays. Came to a picture of some turkeys; but they are unknown over here, so couldn't explain them. We had quite an argument over corn. Our corn they call maize, (pronounced mize, and by the way, the people here speak neither high nor low German) and corn to them is wheat, barley, etc. We finally got straightened out. Came to a picture of Chicago, & she said she had a friend there. Every body over here has a friend or relative somewhere in the States. Don't know whether it's so or just to gain our sympathy. Stayed with one old guy, though, who said he had two brothers in the States; one in Kansas, & the other in Oklahoma. He brought out a bunch of pictures and some had been made in Seneca, Kansas, and the others in some burg in Oklahoma. They were of his brothers' families. That fellow lived in Luxemburg, though.

Well, the boxing matches between the Sanitary Train - Thursday morning.

Stopped all of a sudden last night. One of the boys came in & said that the boxing matches were to be held last night instead of tonight, so we had to hurry to catch a truck to take us over. Five truck loads of us went from the Sanitary Train. Our first two men lost to the Machine gunners, but our third man knocked out his opponent in the first round. Got back about nine o'clock. Well, we've still got one man in the Division fights, and I think he'll go quite a ways.

There is to be a football game Saturday, between the Ambulance Companies & the Field Hospitals. The Ambulance Companies are getting together between 9:30 & 11:00 every morning to form a cheering section. Hope we beat the Hospitals.

Have still got a few cooties; but had my clothes deloused yesterday, took a bath, & put on boiled underwear. Don't know how long I'll stay rid of them, but hope for a least a week. Haven't had such an awfully big bunch lately, any-way. Only found from one to six every night, which isn't bad by a long ways. After coming out of the first Argonne, I counted 150 on my undershirt, and then quit counting and threw the shirt in the fire. Never expect to have them that bad again though, or at least I hope I never get them like that.

Can get about all that we need at the commissary nowadays. Got a can of Baker's cocoa the other day, also some condensed milk. The milk is sweetened so we don't need any sugar. In fact, it's a little bit too sweet. Can also get all kinds of cookies, and cocoa & cookies don't go so bad. The candy they get in is soon sold out, but I always manage to get some of it. Can get Smith Brothers' cough drops, Wrigley's gum, Colgate's shaving soap & tooth paste, and about everything else you need.

The leave center is at Puerveid, and three day passes are issued. All you have to take is your blankets. There are all kinds of things going on all the time. There are trips on the Rhine, movies every afternoon & evening as well as show---(?) bands, and everything like that. Ice cream & cake every evening, you can eat your meals at real tables, and don't have to line up for chow; in fact, all the boys who have gone are perfectly willing to go again. I think I'll try to go down sometime before we leave. I don't expect that we will leave very soon, either.

Well, that is about all there is to write about this time. Hope I get some more mail soon.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.

Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Feb. 20, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Still here, and feeling fine. By the way, how does this look to you? This morning our trucks went to Wirges to get lumber to build seven mess halls and a Recreation Hall. Does that look as though we would soon be home? There is to be a mess hall for each of the seven companies of the Sanitary Train which are here. Field Hospital No. 3 has a hospital established some place else, and is the only company not here. The Recreation Hall is to be a whopper, or so I understand. So it doesn't look as though we would leave immediately, at any rate.

Mailed another copy of the "Stars and Stripes" yesterday; also a copy of the "First Sanitarian", our newspaper. As it is headed, it is "the only American newspaper published across the Rhine". You can tell by reading only a short ways, that Germans did the printing. Some of the spelling certainly is fierce. You ought to be able to get the drift of things though.

Signed the pay-roll this morning. It's the first time we've ever signed it so early. Don't know how it happened. Oh, well, I'd just as soon.

Two days ago got that registered package containing a pair of sox, wristlets, and some papers. Glad to get the other things of course, but the papers were what I wanted most. Am not getting much mail lately; in fact, that package was all I've had in a long time. Don't know whether it isn't coming through, or whether none is being sent. You might tell John to write once in a while. Oh, yes, I wrote to Grandpa Miller the other day, as you said he wanted to hear from me.

You said some time ago that the High School had written to me; but if they have, I've never received a letter.

It's raining out-doors this morning, and has been raining off and on for the last three days. Guess the snowy part of winter is about over. It won't hurt my feelings in the least if it is. Even at that, I hate to see it rain all the time, as it probably will do now. Guess I'll be able to last through it if the rest do.

Just at present the only thing that is worrying me is whether I'll get back in time for school or not. I hate to think of missing another year, and then having to go back. It's liable to be pretty hard work if I'm away from it that long. Oh, well, there are six months yet, tho to tell the truth, that isn't such a very long time.

There is a machine gun company and a battery of 75's just over the hill making quite a little noise. Don't know whether there is a sham battle on or whether they are just having a little target practice.

Well, must close. Write soon, and send papers whenever you can.

Love to all,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Feb. 21, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Just got your letter of the 2nd. Also one of Mother's & Elsie Mae's of the same date. They made pretty good time, only 18 days.

Hope that by this time you have also received the money order for \$25, which I sent not long after I sent the first one. The one you sent was dated Dec. 31, & the last one Jan. 11th. That is about all I can send, at least at the present time. Have bought a few things over here, and prices aren't the lowest I've ever seen.

Have had two letter apiece from both Knox & Fritz, & expect another almost any day. It only takes nine days to get a letter to them now, so I can write one to either of them to-night and get an answer by the time this reaches you.

You say that the story is lost from the time we entered the Argonne until we reached Luxemburg, so I will rewrite it. The Argonne Forest is one bunch of woods after another, with valleys in between. The undergrowth is fierce, so you can see that it was some job to carry a loaded litter. However, only one man died on us before we got him in, and he was unconscious when we picked him up. A couple of us got sniped at with machine guns up there and I've had shells come two close for comfort, but I was lucky. Of the 30 of us that went up there, only 9 stayed until relieved. The others were either wounded or gassed, or so sick that they were sent to the hospital. One fellow ruptured himself. Only one member of this company was killed in the Argonne. The day before we were relieved I had my gas mask on for two hours which was the longest stretch. Were relieved

about the fifteenth of October and went back to Culey(?), near Bar-le-Duc. Left Culey(?) about the first of Nov. and went up to the Front in the drive on Sedan. Ran into the hardest shelling I was ever in at the town of Mouzzon (*Mouzon). It's right on the bank of the Muese, and the Germans had the hills just across the stream. They were putting every shell into the town, which was full of all kinds of supplies. We crawled into a cellar & stayed there about half an hour, but it got too hot for us, so we left town. The burg was on fire when we left.

Had just been relieved & got back from the Front when the Armistice went into effect. Moved back by stages. Stayed on "dead man's hill" where the hardest fighting around Verdun took place, for three days. Moved back to Verdun and stayed there until the 20th. Fritz was there all they time, but I never knew it.

Left Verdun on the 20th, I believe, and started into Luxemburg. Went to Bonvillers, then to Erch(?) & Dalheim.

Guess that takes you up to the letter you mentioned -

Just got back from a show given by the 6th Marines. They are in the Second Div. which is on our right.

Must close for this time.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France

Hillscheid, Germany.
Feb. 21, 1919

Dear Mother:

Got your letter of the 2nd just after dinner. It is now about 7:30 P.M. and will write this before I go to bed.

Have sent about all the post cards that I am able to get here; but when we move, will send some more. Don't expect to move for some time to come tho.

Have had two letters from Knox; also two from Fritz, and expect another from each of them at any time. I think I said in my last letter that I got no pen in the package and also said that I had written to Grandpa Miller.

Have quit the shorthand class & am coaching Brewer, who is trying for West Point. We have a geography, history, elementary algebra, and plane & solid geometry. I get a good review on them, but no advance work. Wish you could get me some books. I

could use them all right. If there is a chance of getting them thru, Prof. Armstrong could tell you what I'd want. Doubt whether it is possible to get them here tho.

Have no "Y." nor "K.C." here. The Commissary is run by the Chaplain and he's got all the others backed off the map. As for prices, some stuff is even cheaper than in the states. Get all kinds of candy & such stuff nowadays.

My mail seems to be coming a little better now. Got two letters yesterday & your's & dad's to-day, so that isn't so bad. Will write Elsie Mae to-morrow & suppose I'll have to write Charles or I'll have a fight on my hands. Guess I'll have the time though, and I know I've got the paper.

Well, the Armistice has been renewed for the last time, and I hope that Peace will be signed before many months. Even if an Army of Occupation is kept on the Rhine, I think that duration of war & drafted men will be sent home a short time after Peace is signed. Am hoping so anyway.

Was rid of the cooties all last week. Took a bath Wednesday and put on clean underwear, and am lousier than ever. Don't know where they came from unless they weren't boiled enough to kill the eggs. Gave the old lady my others yesterday, and she boiled them all afternoon. Guess that ought to fix them. Am going to have the same thing done to these when I change again. Haven't any other O.D.'s so can't get them boiled, but I do have them deloused every time I take a bath. Oh, I'll get rid of them before I get back to the states, I guess. Think I have plenty of time, at any rate.

Well, we have inspection in the morning, and it's bed-time now so will have to quit. Besides, there is nothing of any importance going on.

Oh, yes, I forgot. I had to let my belt out one notch to-day; and it fits me as snug in the new hole as it did in the other a week ago. Don't know how much I weigh though.

Love,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
Feb. 24, 1919

Dear kid sister:

I got your letter three days ago, but haven't had time to answer it until today. I don't expect to come home very soon, tho I wish I could. I don't think I'll be able to come before next August or September at the earliest. What do you want me to bring home with me, a German boy or girl? Or don't you want me to bring anything like that? The kids here can count up to one-hundred already, except that they say thrity instead of thirty. Can Charles count to one-hundred? The boys & girls here don't have to go to school after they are fourteen or fifteen. They go to work when they get that old.

I can't send you a picture because I haven't had any taken yet. If I have one taken I will send you one.

We had pumpkin pie for dinner yesterday & apple pie to-day. Do you have much pie anymore? You will have to bake me one when I get home, also some pancakes. Have you got any honey and strawberry jam left? You'd better save me some, hadn't you?

Tell mama that I got an announcement of Uncle Hugh's marriage to-day. It is kind of late, seeing as he has been married twenty-three days now.

So you are in the fifth grade now. Who is your teacher? Does she know what she is teaching about? What grade is Charles in, and who is teaching his room? How often does he get spanked? If he gets naughty you had better take him down and sit on him for me. Tell me how many times you have to sit on him and I'll spank his pants when I get home.

Am sending the second number of our paper in this letter. Give it to mama, and tell her to save all of them that I send home. I have another "Stars & Stripes" here to send home also.

Am glad you received the other \$25 I sent. That is about all the money I can send at present.

Well, Elsie Mae, I must close. Write me again soon.

With love,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A. P. O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Mch. 1, 1919.

Dear Mother:

You ask about the entertainments. We usually have two or three every week. Had a five reel movie last night. Have one movie every week; and there are all kinds of shows rambling around thru the different divisions.

Brewer is twenty years old, and has not finished high school. His father is a commuter and lives at Hoboken. Gilbert was working as a clerk in the office of a smelting plant out at Salt Lake City when he enlisted. Hope you get the picture I sent.

Send all the Heralds you can. Can get all the magazine I want now, but would like to get all the papers.

The woman where we are staying does our washing & all our sewing for us. All you have to do to get soap is to go to the kitchen & ask for it. Can buy it at the Commissary if necessary_

The Paris edition of the Chicago Tribune printed a General order that came out a short while ago. It told what divisions would be sent home up to the first of July. Knox's is to leave in May. No regular Army divisions are to go so that let's us sit right here until July at any rate. Not a very promising outlook I must say. By that time the boys of this division, that is the old members, will have four service stripes. Two years over here. I'll have two & I'm perfectly well satisfied with the one I've got now. Was entitled to it the middle of January, but haven't put it on yet. Some of them that didn't get across seem to be raising quite a howl because our stripes are different from theirs. If they want to get a gold stripe, I'll trade places with them, & they can stay over here for the next six months.

Started a letter to Charles the other day, but didn't get to finish it. Will finish it some time to-day. Wrote one to Mae & have mailed it already.

Well, it is the same old thing over here. Nothing doing at all, as usual. Still I guess I can't kick, and ought to be satisfied. But they say that a man isn't a soldier unless he has something to growl about, and all of us certainly do our share of growling.

Well, I've got to quit. This is my third letter this morning, and there is just about the same amount of news in each of them.

With love,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart.
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
Mch. 1, 1919.

(*addressed to "Master Charles E. Carhart")

Dear kiddo:

I do not know when I am coming home. I "likle" it here, but I "likle" it better over there. My address will be at the end of this letter.

Say, kiddo, are you behaving at school? I told Elsie May to take you down & sit on you if you're not. What grade are you in & who is your teacher? You ought to write to me oftener, but you don't have to write a line a day like you did last time.

Well, Knox will be home in about three months I think, so you'll have to visit with him until I come home. Maybe I'll be home by the time that school starts next fall. Maybe mama will let you go out hunting jack-rabbits with me next winter. Do you want to go?

Then mama says you have a new pair of skates, so we'll have to go skating out to the Country Club. And then maybe in the summer we can take the car & go out fishing, maybe down to the Elkhorn. Shall we do it? And we'll take a tent and stay a week. How will that do?

Well, remember that if you don't behave at school Elsie Mae is going to sit on you, and maybe we won't get to go camping. She is pretty heavy you know & she might sit down too hard, and then you wouldn't want to go camping or skating or anything else. Maybe you'd better get the boxing gloves & make her put the other pair on. Then hit her in the nose, and when she goes to tell mama you want to hide under the back porch.

Now don't forget what I've told you, and write me again soon.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
March 4, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Received a bundle of five home papers last night with two Hersheys & two packs of Wrigleys inside, so thought I could afford to write a letter.

We are getting an issue of candy every ten days now, and the last two times we have received half pound almond bars. The last time was last night so I guess I had enough candy.

But the papers were what I wanted more than anything else. I stayed up till about ten o'clock to read them. Hope you send more.

Don't know whether I told you or not, but for the last four or five days I have been working at the Officer's Club. Two boys were up here, but one of them was told to report down to the Company office to work there. We supposed it was to be for a short time only, and I expected to have to give up this job yesterday or to-day. But last night an order came in telling him to report to the adjutant-General of the Third Army at Coblenz. He left this morning so I guess I've got the job. Then the other fellow got a three day pass to Nuseweid, which is the 3rd Corps Recreation Center; and he left this morning. So I am here alone.

I thought they would send some one up to help me, but no one has arrived as yet. This means that I'll have to get up at seven in the morning to clean up, & then stay up at night besides. When there were two of us, I got up at seven & cleaned out, and went to bed at nine in the evening. He got up at noon & stayed up at night to make the sandwiches, & do other such things. I'm hoping they send some one up to help me, but I've been here alone all day. (It is now seven o'clock).

About a week after we came here, that is, around the first of January, a woman in the house next door died of tuberculosis. Last week her twelve year old daughter also died with it. Last night a ten year old girl in the house on the other side of us died of the same thing. Doesn't appear to be a very healthy place, does it?

As far as I know of only two men out of the Sanitary Train have died since we came here. They were both out of Ambulance Co. No. 2 One died of influenza and the other of pneumonia. There don't seem to be many sick men though, even if it does rain all the time & they get wet.

Will send \$25 more home one of these times, but maybe not this month. Have two one hundred franc notes in my pocket at present, which makes about \$38 in real money. The money in both France & Germany is mostly paper which is very easily torn. The boys all call it wall paper or tobacco coupons. The Germans

even have paper money for as low as 25 pfennigs which before the War would have been about five cents, but is now only two. There is very little silver. I considered myself lucky to get a three & five mark piece silver at the present time.

The different cities over here also make paper money of their own. If you accept it & move someplace else you'r just out of luck, because it is no good outside of that city. The Germans also issued war money which is good only to a certain date. The fifty mark bills were good until March 1. Fortunately I didn't have any. Of course I could get face value at a bank, but there is no bank here. We were also paid in some new French money this month. At the top of the bill it says, "The Treasury of the Armies" & is signed by the Paymaster General of the Armies. On the other side it says "The French Republic", and down below, "Le remboursement de ce billet dont las contre - valeur est diposes a las Banque def France, devra etre de-mande avant l'expiration de la 2e Annu qui sulvra la cessation des hostilities". (?-all French words). Get John to translate it. As close as I can get it is that it is payable in silver by the Bank of France, two years after the cessation of hostilieties. Don't know whether that is correct or not. I have a few pieces of French & German money, both silver & paper which I am going to bring home. Am going to get ahold of some new bills of this war money if possible.

Have heard nothing more about going home. Everybody seems to be resigned to his fate, or else there would be some rumors flying around. Knox ought to be back in Wayne some time in June, I think. No chance for me though.

Well, I must close. Movies at the Recreation Hall tonight, but I've got this job on my hands.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Division.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
March 6, 1919.

Dear John:

Say, what's the matter with you anyway? I think it's about time you were writing. I haven't received any answers from the

last two letters I wrote you, but I've got replies to all the others I wrote at the same time. A little letter writing won't hurt you, & it gets dog-goned monotonous over here without a word now or then. Besides you don't have to play basket-ball or be with Mars all of the time. You might remember that I'm over here, and am liable to be here for another six months from all indications. And when you do write, don't stop at half a page, but tell me something about all the guys there at home. Also all the results of your basket-ball games. I haven't heard a word about Chink or Mike since I've been over here, and all I know about the ball games I get out of the papers.

I get a letter from Wood about every fifteen days now, also from Fritz. Got one from Fritz this morning. He has been transferred to the 23rd Grand(?) Division, whatever that is.

There is an article on the bulletin board about the decorations that the Rainbow Division are entitled to wear. It was taken from some paper in the States. First they get an A (that's the shape) for the First Army. Well, we get an A (*with a circle around it) for the Third Army. The A (*with a circle around it) stands for Army of Occupation. That is on the right shoulder. Then on the left they get a (*drawing of rainbow insignia) of three colors for the Rainbow Division. Well, we get a red 1. Then they get the shoulder cord or fouragerre (according to the item). That is for three citations, but it has to be awarded by a French commission & I haven't heard of any Division getting it. Some companies have, though. Well, anyway, we have as many citations as they can scrape up. And then the service stripes. All the old men in my outfit have three now & I expect they'll have four before we get home. I've had one since January. Then they talk about a gold star for the first 50,000 men over here. Well, the First Division was the first division to come over. And then the scarlet stripe for honorable discharge. We practically all will get that. Then on the right sleeve the wound stripes. Some of our men have two.

Now write right away

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France

Hillscheid, Germany.
Mar. 10, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Am enclosing six post cards, mostly views along the Moselle. Two of them are of Chochem, a town which we came through.

Haven't had any mail for about four days, so am expecting some to-day. Don't know whether I'll get any or not though, of course.

Bought Knox an Iron Cross to-day. He wrote to me to get him one. It cost me 15 marks. Fritz says he wants two, but I have no more marks just at present.

Marks are taking a decided drop. When we came over here 100 francs equaled 80 marks. Yesterday 100 francs equaled 210 marks, and I heard to-day that they had gone down to 250 marks, but don't know for sure. Have had only one paper in the last two weeks, so don't know what is wrong. Must be something going on farther in Germany.

Saw a pipe to-day that I'd like to send home. It was made to order for some soldier & cost 70 marks. It is as tall as I am. The bowl is of crockery & has a view of the Rhine on it. The cover of the bowl is a miniature helmet. The stem is in about ten sections & is made of helmets, guns, canons & everything else imaginable. Altogether is sure is some pipe.

Took some pictures the other day, but they turned out as bad as the first film. Don't know what was wrong, but I'm going to give the camera a good looking over.

Well, there is nothing more to write. In fact there never is anything. We did have a good show Saturday night. Some artillery outfit in the 32nd Div. put it on.

Love,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
March 12, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got your letter of Feb. 19. It's the first mail we've had for a week, so I knew I'd get at least one letter.

There are lots of kids over here; but the only English they know is "When the moon shines over the cow-shed", and every kid in Germany can sing that I guess.

Am sending six more post-cards in this letter. That is all the new ones I could find.

To-day is a regular spring day. Don't even need a cap, let alone a blouse. It has been raining for the past week, but there have been no rain clouds in the sky to-day.

Got the lumber for our mess hall to-day, so suppose they will begin to put it up soon. It is close to where I used to stay, and where I still keep my mess kit.

They got in some chocolate bars & some cocoa last night at the commissary. Naturally I got my share. Got two cans of cocoa.

Well, I guess I'll have to quit. Nothing happens around here. They did have a sham battle over west of here some place this morning. Could hear the machine guns going. There was an observation balloon up, & a couple of Spad planes came circling around here for quite a while.

With love,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
March 16, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Sunday again, so concluded that it was time to write. Things here are as usual. Am sending another "First Sanitarian", and "Stars & Stripes" under separate cover.

Bought a watch in Coblenz the other day. Cost me 80 marks, which is about ten dollars. Broke my wrist-watch the day I left New York, and have been unable to get it fixed.

Have put in for a three day pass to Neuwied, which is the Third Corps Recreation Center. The only thing I care about going for is the Rhine trip. One day they go up & the next down the Rhine. Each is an all day trip. The boy who is here with me took both trips, and he says it is worth your while. Besides I've concluded to see as much as possible while I'm here, for I may never get the chance again.

On the first trip Routh (that is the other kid) went up the river to Oberwesel, which is about half way between Coblenz & Bingen. At Oberwesel he saw Schonburg Castel and ruins of other old castles & forts. At St. Goarshausen the Lurlei Rocks and Katz Castle. At St. Goar(?), Rheinfels Castle. At Osterpay, Liebenich Castle. At Braubach, the Markburg, the best preserved fortress on the Rhine. At Copellen-Stolzenfels, Stolzenfels Castle which was owned by the Kaiser. At Ehrenbreitstein he saw the Fortress Ehrenbreitstein which is the one held by the Americans. It is on a bluff high above the river. At Coblenz the Kaiser Wilhelm Denkmal statue or Deutsches Ech(?). Then Neuwied from which he started.

The next day he went down the river. At Andernach saw the ruins of Andernach Castle. At Honningen; Arenfels Castle(*.) At Remagen, Marienfels Castle.

At Rolandsich a view of the Seven Mountains and the Islands of Grafenwerth. At Godesberg Spa, Godesberg Castle. Turned at Bonn which is a University town of 90,000 population.

Neuwied is a town of 19,000 and is fifteen km. below Coblenz. Sure hope I get that pass.

Rumor around again that we are going home, but I've heard so many rumors that I don't believe any of them any more. Will believe it when we are on the boat, and no sooner.

According to the "Stars & Stripes" for March 14 each outfit gets a silver band on its flag for each sector. The First Division will have some bunch, believe me.

In the same paper there is an article about the Y.M.C.A. in the editorials. Please read it. In a New York Herald some time ago, a Colonel who had returned to the States said, "If you can't say anything good about any-body don't say anything" when asked about the Y.M.C.A. over here. But the soldiers over here say things, and they use very strong language. I am of the same opinion myself, and will tell you why when I get back.

All for this time.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.

Am. Ex. Forces
France.

(*Letter mailed to Mrs. C. E. Carhart, postmarked 3/17/19:)

A poem written because of the way the 42nd and some other divisions are being written up in the states, while the First is unknown to the newspapers and the vast majority of people in the United States. Just the same, these divisions must admit these facts: the First Division was the first Division to reach France; it was the first to reach the Front; it's artillery fired the first American shell in the War; it fought and won the first American battle (Cantigny); it has had more killed and wounded than any other division: it was the first to cross into Germany after the signing of the Armistice; and it is now the farthest Division across the Rhine. which it was the first to cross.

Ye Tragic story of Ye Fighting First.

An ancient wrinkled soldier man
 With beard of yellow stain,
Went marching through a city park
 A-hobbling with a cane,
When up there tripped a lad and lass,
 A pretty buxom twain.

When blithely spoke the little maid
 "I pray thee sire", spoke she,
"What did you in the great big war
 They fought across the sea
Before we happened here on earth
 My cousin Jim and me?"

The ancient soldier's eye was bright,
 And pride was in his smile
"Sure, I will tell thee pretty maid,
 So rest thee here awhile;
For I am of the Fighting First,
 The last man of the file. (*)"

The little maiden's face was blank,
 The lad's a troubled frown,
"And What, sire, was the Fighting First?
 For it is not writ down
In any of the history books
 We have in Boston Town."

What! know ye not the Fighting First?"

The old man's voice was sad,
"We were the first in far Gallie
To strike the Deutsche, my lad,
We were the first to hear him shout
His warlike "Kamerad!"

"Nay, Nay! Nay, Nay!" cried out the maid
"Right there your mind's amix;
My grandpapa was over there,
He's of the Twenty-Sixth;
And well I know they were the first
The horrid Boche to fix."

"Aye, that is true", spoke up the lad
"for me 'tis written down,
As all can very plainly see
In volume big and brown,
In every history, in fact
We have in Boston town."

A tremor shook the ancient man
"Then, be ye wrong or right,
We were the ones to smash the Huns
In that Cantigny fight."
The youth, he slowly shook his head
"I see you are not bright."

"For it was there that my grandsire
First clambered o'er the top,
The gallant Forty-second lads
Came after skip and hop;
So, if you think the First was there
I'd better call a cop."

The ancient soldier wrung his beard,
A wild gleam in his eye,
"Across the fields of Soissons
We made the Germans fly."
The lad winked to the maiden,
"That is another lie."

"For my grandad has a brother
And he's of Wild Cat fame.
"Twas they who chased the fleeing Huns
Across the Soissons plain.
Please don't josh me any further,
You've got water on the brain."

The wrinkled soldier clawed his beard,
 He left that merry twain,
His rimy eye was glassed and dim,
 His face was smeared with pain.
He knew the First had never had -
 Had water on the brain.

He sought him a professor wise
 And to him his tale he told;
"Back from the Front by grim Mont Sec
 I saw the Dutchmen rolled;
And in the hell of Argonne Woods
 We taught them steel was cold.

From Argonne Woods to Beaumont Town
 From Beaumont to Sedan,
The Fighting First it was accurst
 By all the German clan,
Now tell me, am I right or wrong,
 Ye wise professor man?"

Ye wise professor took him down
 A book of names and dates,
And having turned the pages o'er
 Said he, "This book by Yates
Tells all about the Fighting first
 They never left the States."

(Don't know the author)

Hillscheid, Germany
March 21, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Am enclosing a couple of snap-shots of myself. Neither one is very good. The paper isn't anything extra, and they aren't developed the right length of time. However, the negative is good, and am keeping it with my others. You will notice that I have on a German belt, and that my watch fob is an Iron Cross.

You asked me about the houses here. From the picture you can see that it is of brick. There are no frame buildings over here. They are all of brick or stone. You will notice also that we have electric lights. They come in handy believe me. Then take a look at the windows. The top part has a hinge on one end, and the lower part opens in the middle. All of the

windows over here are like that. Consequently they are always in the road when they are opened up.

Am also sending some other pictures. Number I is of Rauth who is also up here at the Club. No.s II & III are of the forest just back of the house. Neither are very good pictures. Numbers IV & V are of the station or Bahnhof, and the train. All of these should have been better pictures, and would have been if a good photographer had developed them.

Haven't had any mail for about five days. About time for some to arrive.

Just got back from getting a shot in the arm. Got it at Field 13. It is 3 in one stuff, so we only have to take one shot instead of the usual three. Doesn't hurt my feelings in the least, even though all I expect to get out of this is a sore arm.

They have already forgotten that rumor about going home in the 42nds place, so it didn't last long.

Must close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
March 25, 1919.

Dear little sister:

Just got your letter to-day. It is the first one I've had for a week, so was pretty glad to get it. I don't know when I am coming home, but think we will be here all summer.

Will bring something "German" when I come home, and am putting a one half franc pién in this letter. Hope you get it. It is worth about ten cents in our money.

As I don't have to stand Revielle or Retreat I don't get up for breakfast any more. I get up about eight o'clock, and have my breakfast here. You can't guess what I had for breakfast this morning, either. I had cocoa, white bread and apple butter, and two fried eggs. Have been having cocoa for about two weeks, and last night they got some eggs in at the Cantine and I get a dozen. They cost me four francs or eighty cents. Almost eight cents apiece, and they are cold storage eggs too. But we two boys have had six so far, and none of them are bad. This is the second time that I've had eggs since I've been over

here. The first time was four days ago when Frau Schneider gave me one for breakfast.

Well it is dinner time and I'm not in the habit of skipping dinner so I guess I'll have to stop.

Tell Charles that if he writes me a letter I'll send him a half a franc too, and if he don't write I'll paddle his pants when I get home.

Your big brother Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Ambulance Company No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

(*Envelope addressed to Master Charles E. Carhart).

Hillscheid, Germany

March 28, 1919.

Dear kiddo:

Got your letter yesterday noon but have not had time until now to answer it. Tell mama a got the papers for February and up until March 6th. Also the candy and gum.

Sure, I'll make you a box kite when I get home, but why can't John make you one now? Tell him he can stay home one night from the Lewis's and make you one.

You don't want to know when I'm coming home any more than I do, kiddo. Wish I did know.

I sent Elsie Mae a half franc piece in her letter, and I am sending you a ten pfennig piece from Coblenz in this letter. I've got a lot of German and French money that I'll bring home with me. It is mostly paper money and the boys call it "wall-paper" or "tobacco coupons".

You'd better tell John that it is time to write me a letter. He's only written to me about twice since I've been over here. And the next time you write you'd better make your letter a little longer.

It has been snowing almost every day for the last week, but there is no snow on the ground because it melts right away. It has been snowing all afternoon.

Well, I'll have to quit. Remember and write soon.

Your big brother,

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12

A.P.O. 729
1st Division
Am. Ex. Forces

Hillscheid, Germany
March 30, 1919.

Dear Mother:

That card you received was just one that every soldier had to send home telling where he was, etc. My address is still the same as before.

Brewer is twenty years old, and is about the size of John. Perhaps he is a little heavier, but not so very much.

Haven't been over to Coblenz, but am going to try to get a pass over there one of these days.

Glad you got the pictures of the company. Was afraid that they might get lost.

One of our officers is going over the Division trying to get the men to re-enlist. Those that do get a three months furlough to the States. Think I will leave the furlough go and get home for good.

There is a show here almost every night now. Some of them are good, and some aren't. Fortunately we aren't nearly so particular as we were back in the states.

Have had five times as much snow in the last week as we had all winter before. About three inches on the ground now. The thermometer isn't even down to freezing though, as far as I can see.

Got a letter from Elsie Mae to-day, and one from Dad. Answered Dad's about an hour ago, and will write to Mae to-morrow. Haven't time yet to-night.

Well, I seem to be all out of news so will have to close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
March 30, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Just received your letter of the 12th. Have written to Knox asking him to give me all of the information he can. Don't know whether anything will ever come of it, but will try. However, the best you can do is put in for a discharge with the affidavits, and then sit and wait. There is nothing else that you can do. Quite a few men have put in for discharges as long as two months ago, but as far as I know they have heard nothing from them. It is an awfully long road to travel from this end. First it goes to your C.O., then to Sanitary Train headquarters, Division headquarters, Third Corps headquarters and then General Headquarters. Naturally it takes quite a while. But I understand that from that end it goes straight to General Pershing, at least in case of sickness. Don't know about it in this case though. If there is a General Order out about it, it will probably explain how to proceed. The one thing is that if you should get a discharge you couldn't get the money from home. The first thing you would know about it would be when you received word that your discharge was granted, and then it would be too late to get money from home.

There are about three inches of snow on the ground now, and it has been snowing all day. May quit after while, though.

You should have received some of the "Stars and Stripes" and "Sanitarions" that I have sent, by this time. However you'll probably receive them some time.

Must close as I have some work to do.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
April 4, 1919.

Dear little sister:

Told mama in her letter that I would write to you the day after I wrote her, but have been pretty busy and haven't had time.

Am going down to Nuewied next Thursday for three days. While there I am going to take a trip up the Rhine, and one down

the Rhine. You go on a boat, and it takes all day for each trip. I may be able to get a pass from there into Coblenz, and see Warren Shultheis. You can get passes from Nuewied to go to visit the Fortress Ehrenbreitstein and the Kaiser's Castle, Stolzenfels(?).

Had my picture taken to-day by a photographer here, and if it comes out good I will send one home soon. The photographer is to have a proof Sunday.

Tell mama that I got weighed to-day, and that I weigh one hundred sixty-five pounds.

This is with my clothes on of course.

We got paid yesterday, and I drew one hundred fifty-four francs instead of the one hundred forty-five I used to get. It used to take 5.70 francs to make a dollar, and now it takes 5.80.

I got a letter from Knox yesterday and he says that they start getting ready to go home Sunday. They go home in May.

An order came into our office saying that they are recruiting men in the States to take the places of the drafted and duration of war men. It says that the recruits will be sent over here as soon as possible. Don't know how soon that will be though.

Well, Mae it's time to go to bed, so must stop.

Your brother,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces.
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
Apr. 7, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Am enclosing two pictures of myself. The better one is the proof, and the other the finished picture. The old guy that took them says he has a different kind of paper that will make a better picture, so I'm having him try one. It can't be any worse than this one, and may be better.

Got a pass to take a trip on the Rhine, and went yesterday. Got up at 5:30 and walked to Hohr. Took a street car to Ehrenbreitstein, and crossed to Coblenz on the pontoon bridge. The boat wouldn't leave for about an hour so we went down to the statue of Kaiser Wilhelm I. It is about seventy-five feet high

I should think, including the base. Went up as far as possible and got a good view of Ehrenbreitstein across the river. It sure is some fortress.

The boat left at ten o'clock, and we went down the river. The first thing we saw was the place where Caesar built his bridge. There is a small island there, almost in the center of the river. At Andernach saw an old wall and a tower that were built in 1200. At Nemedy is the Nemedy geyser, largest in the world, which throws out the water every two hours. The next thing was the Hammerstein, built up on top of a high cliff. All of these ruins are on cliffs from 500 to 1000 feet above the river, and most are close to perpendicular. Then came some of the more modern castles, one of which, Schoss Arenfels, is the property of the Bethmann-Holliveg family. The ruins of Ockenfels was next, and then Remagen. A short distance down the river from this town, and built on much higher ground is the Appollinaris Church. Saint Appolinaris is supposed to have been buried there. His body was being taken to Cologne, but when they got that far they boat refused to go any farther. After that came Rolands-Bogen or Rolands arch. There is also a newer castle on the cliff higher up. Across the river is Drachenfels and some guy is supposed to have killed a dragon on the cliff below it. He had enough of a job just to get up the cliff, believe me. The cliff is 1000 feet high. This place is about the best on the river to see the Seven(?) Mountains, of which Drachenfels is one. We turned around at Godesberg about 50 km. from Coblenz. And I forgot that at Engers, the same place as Caesar's bridge, is a military school where Hindenburg got his training. We also passed a branch of the Krupp works. Got back to Coblenz at 4 o'clock, got supper at the Festhall and came back here. Didn't have time to look up any-body there.

The river is marked off in km. from Mainz to Cologne. Mainz is 0, Coblenz 90, and Cologne 185. Every tenth km. is marked by a white stone like this (*narrow vertical rectangle drawn here) set in the bank, one on each side. The half kms. are marked by a white cross, and the km. are painted in large white letters on the stones on each bank.

Am going to go up stream one of these days if I get a chance. They say that that is the better trip of the two, but I'm satisfied with the one yesterday. I also want to go thru the Kaiser's palace and thru Ehrenbreitstein.

Saw the 42nd division leaving yesterday. Suppose they'll soon be home.

Will close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12

A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
April 11, 1919.

Dear Dad:

No order about "Student's Claims" has come into our office, as far as I can find out. To tell the truth I don't think the thing would even go through our office here. Am waiting until I hear from Knox before I do anything though.

Was in Coblenz to-day to get some beer for the Club. Went out and saw Warren Shultheis. Was there about an hour. He is a first-class sergeant in Evac. Hospital 9 now. The hospital is in the barracks on the heights above the town, on the side of the city opposite the Mosell. Left Coblenz at five and got back here at five-thirty. We had a Ford full of beer, and four men, besides being up hill all the way; so you can see it isn't very far. And the hills here aren't little ones like those at home. You wind around & around in order to get up them.

One of the boys left for St. Aignan to-day to go back to the States to be discharged. He is getting out to go to school, but his parents had their Congressman write to General Pershing about it. In other words, he worked it from that end, which you aren't supposed to do. Nevertheless it is done.

Well, the place is full of officers, and I've been interrupted so much already that I guess I'd better stop.

Your son,
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
April 13, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Am returning the affidavits you sent. It happened like this. I went down to the office to-night, and was talking to Brewer (he's company clerk) about getting a discharge to go to

school. I showed him the affidavits and he said that they couldn't be better and that he would put in for me if I wanted him to. But he also said that the chances of ever hearing from it are slim. While we were talking one of the Officers came in. He agreed with Brewer that I had about one chance in a hundred of hearing from it. He also said that the best thing I could do was to return the affidavits to you, and for you to put in from that end. The best way, and the way another fellow in the company did, was to have his Congressman write direct to General Pershing. Of course he sent some affidavits along, or rather his father did. From this end a request would have to go thru military channels, but from that end it doesn't. This other fellow is getting out to go to school. He goes back as a casual, and isn't to be discharged till he reaches the States. The Officer also thinks that if you do this way I am pretty certain of getting a discharge in six or eight weeks. That would get me back there in time for school next fall. So I am taking his advice and returning the affidavits to you. The best thing to do is to get a Congressman or Representative to send them, with a personal letter, direct to General Pershing.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid
April 18, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Haven't had a letter for about a week, but I guess it is about time to write anyhow.

Was in to Coblenz to-day after some more beer, but didn't stay very long. Left here at two o'clock; and got back at four, so you can see about how much time we had.

Another rumor out that we are to be in Camp Pike by the 25th of July. Camp Pike has been announced as the home station of the First Division and Camp Dodge of the Second Division. Haven't heard anything definite about leaving though. Hope I hear something pretty soon.

Got a blouse issued to me to-day, and I certainly needed it. Got the one I have been wearing just before I left Fort Sheridan. It was issued to me about July first.

Still raining all the time, as it has every day since I've been over here I think. But the leaves are coming out, and the fruit trees have blossomed. Whenever we have a clear day it is good and warm and on the other days all that you need is a rain coat to shed the water.

The roads over here are pretty good now. All of the roads that I have seen since I came to Europe have a rock bed, so they don't get over a quarter of an inch of mud on them. But they do get pretty slippery, especially around here where the hills are straight up and down. As a rule they are pretty high too.

The Neuwied passes haven't come in yet. Usually get one bunch a week, but the last ones were a week ago Wednesday. Wish they'd come now that I've got some clothes to wear.

Well, guess I'll have to stop. Will write you if I hear anything definite about the Division going home. I've heard it from some pretty good sources, but still won't believe it yet.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces

Hillscheid, Germany.
April 20, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got your letter, the paper, and the book yesterday. Left the book on the table last night and Sergeant Gandy ran off with it. However, he brought it back this noon, and as I have already finished it I guess I'm ready for the next person who wants it.

Think I'll be able to play for the H.S. next fall. Am enclosing the April 19th number of "The First Sanitarian". It tells what General Mc Glachlin says, and he ought to know. In my last letter I said something about being in Camp Pike by July 25, but had not heard anything but rumors then.

In the paper it also tells of one of our sergeants meeting General Summerall in Paris. Maybe I'd better put it the other way round, tho. General Summerall was in command of the Division when I first came to it.

There is a First Division society now which includes all men who served in the Division from the time it left the States until Nov. 11th. Our names are all on an "Honor Roll". General Summerall is President of the society and General Bullard is

Vice-President. General Bullard was commander of the Division when it first came over.

Have received all of the papers which you sent since December, but none before that date. Guess they either got lost or never came across.

If the Division is to go home this summer as now seems likely, I would rather go with it than as a casual. A casual gets all the worst of it, while if you are with your outfit you have a lot better time of it. Of course moving is no picnic anyway.

Well, must close. will write again in a few days.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Am. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
April 23, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got a pass Monday to go on the river boat trip yesterday, and naturally I went. It is about fifteen km. to Coblenz, but it took us from 5:30 till 8:30 to go by train. Left here at 5:30 and went to Gremzau(?). Changed there and went to Engers, and by the way there are six tunnels between those two towns. Changed at engers and went to Ehrenbreitstein, and from there walked over to Coblenz.

At Engers is the R.T.O. who has charge of shipping the boys back. He is there to ship back the 32nd, and he finishes them to-day. There is a sergeant there with him and he told us this: The R.T.O. went to Coblenz Monday, and when he came back he told the sergeant he had orders to move the 33rd next. Then comes the 89th, 90th, 1st, & 2nd. The 90th goes the first of June, and he thought that the 1st would go about the 15th, and the 2nd a week after the 1st. The 2nd Division men say that we are to parade in Washington on July 4. But it has been announced that there is to be a big Allied parade in Paris, either July 4 or 14. There is to be a Division from each of the Allied countries; and we have heard that we are to parade there, go straight to Brest, and then parade in Washington before going to Camp Pike.

Yesterday we went on the Borussia, the largest excursion boat on the river. Just before we sailed two of us went down to

see the British patrol boats. There were twelve of them, and while we watched they left the docks and went on upstream in single file. Went back and got on the boat and we started. Traveled upstream this time, and we had a band too. First thing was the island just above Coblenz where the Third Army Carnival starts to-day. We did pass General Wickman's house and saw Prince's palace on the outskirts of Coblenz. The palace is large enough for a hotel, and looks more like a big city library than anything I know of. After the island we came to Lahneck(?) Castle where the Knights Templar made their last stand. The Rhine guides say it was first mentioned in 1224. The third place was Stolzenfels, the ex-Kaiser's palace. Next came the Marksburg. Built in 1200. There are two silver mines just back of it that were opened up before the time of Caesar. Across the river is the Konigsstuhl or King's stool, where the Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire were chosen after the death of Charlemagne. It is built down on the bank of the river. Farther up the river are the castles Sternberg and Liebenstein; known as the hostile brothers. They are the castles of two brothers who got into a fight. There castles are about two hundred yards apart. The Cat and the Mouse, castles of two other men who got into a fight, are five km. apart. Across the river, about half way between the two is Rheinfels, built in 1200. In 1255 sixty cities couldn't take it, and in 1689 over 17,000 French couldn't. It is the largest castle of the bunch. At the Lorely Rock we turned around, and got back to Coblenz at 3:30.

Just as I got off the boat an Australian soldier came up, and started talking to me. They are harder to understand than an Englishman. While we were talking an Australian officer came past, but instead of saluting they just spoke to each other. A little later I saw the officer telling a bunch of privates about the Rhine trip.

It's close to supper time so I'll have to stop I guess. Hope all that we have heard about going home is true. It is certain that we will be home before September, so I guess I'll be able to go back to school at that time. Really think we will be home before the end of July.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
May 1, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got your letter of the 8th and 9th this noon. Also the paper.

My shot was a "three in one", but outside of having a sore arm for a couple of hours it didn't bother me. In fact, it was even easier than those I took in the states.

Got three letters yesterday and this package to-day. My last letter was from Knox, and came Monday. He said the date for them to leave their area had been postponed until April 30 (yesterday). Suppose he is on his way back to a port to-day.

The main spring is broken on my watch, and it is impossible to have a watch of that kind fixed here.

It has been snowing all week, and has snowed all day to-day. Asked one of the Germans how long winter was, and it(*he) said 9 months winter and three summer. I've yet to see the three summer months.

Have a calendar here which tells when the sun rises and sets. There is some difference between it and the one at home. On one day in winter the sun rises at 8:14 and sets at 3:44. That is 7½ hrs. of daylight. In the summer on a certain day it rises at 3:39 and sets at 8:24. That is a little over 17 hrs. daylight. A difference of 10 hrs. between summer and winter.

Brewer is working in the office. Has been ever since we left Verdun. Until I came up to the club I was bunking with a fellow named Bolmer from Cincinnatti. He is an intern at a Sanatarium. Am sleeping up here now with Rauth.

Rauth went on pass to Brussels, Belgium yesterday. As soon as he gets back I expect to take a pass, probably to Aix-les-Bains or Paris.

One thousand replacements supposed to come to the first division to-day. Don't know whether there are any medics.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France

Hillscheid, Germany.

May 5, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Nothing much to tell, but as I have nothing to do just at the present I thought I'd write.

There is a notice in the bulletin board which says that the War Department has announced that all American soldiers in Europe will be home by Sept. 1. There was a rumor around some few days ago that the 50,000 who enlisted for the Army of Occupation would be sent to the places that the different divisions would occupy when they left Europe. The First goes to Camp Pike, Arkansas, and the Second to Fort Dodge, Iowa. The other five regular army divisions are to go to Porto Rico, Panama Canal Zone, Philippines, Hawaii, and Alaska.

Two men here have received clippings from papers in the States saying that the First would parade in Washington on July 4. A Lieutenant told me this afternoon that he had received one saying the same thing. That is the first report that came out over here, but now the majority have advanced the time to the last of this month. The latest report is that Head-quarters is to be in Rotterdam June 4th, and the Sanitary Train is to be there June 15th. But they always have to get ahead of time. If we get home by July 4th I'll say that we'll be doing good. As long as we get there by Sept. I'll be satisfied. And this idea of parading in July doesn't exactly suit me. It's liable to be rather hot, especially if we have on these O.D. uniforms instead of khaki. And it will mean about a week of drilling in the sun to get ready for it. Of course, if the Division parades I don't want to be left out; but they usually forget the Sanitary Train, except when there is some work to do.

At any rate, I expect to be home and discharged before school starts, and that is all that's necessary. School will be a vacation after the Army.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France

Hillscheid, Germany.
May 10, 1919.

Dear sister:

Got your letter at the same time as mama's, but didn't have time to write you this afternoon.

I think we will start home next month, and that will be better than a furlough.

I get up at seven now, same as you do. I have to stand all morning calls, so I have to get up at that time to get my work finished.

I am sending you some German money in this letter, a one mark bill. Don't lose it, because it was the only good one I could get. Have some other bills here that I will send home from time to time. I have some silver marks too, but they are too big to send through the mail.

One of the boys who was in this company, but was transferred, is going to be in the London parade. He says they are to go home from England. We all think that we will join them if we sail in convoy. Don't know whether they do that now or not.

Guess I'll have to write Charles a letter, but tell him he's got to write me if he wants me to send him any money.

We still have on our winter underwear, and it gets pretty hot now. Don't believe they have any spring here. It is winter and then summer.

Have to quit, but be sure and answer this.

Your brother
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

(*Addressed to Master Charles Carhart)

Hillscheid, Germany.
May 10, 1919.

Dear kiddo:

You'd better get to work and write me a letter or I won't send you any more money. Am putting a half franc bill in this though.

Are you taking care of the bees this summer? Papa said that you'd have to. How many times have you been stung? I'm

going to send you a picture of the company mascot one of these days. He is a German dog that the company got at Soissons. He has to be at every drill. He comes running whenever he hears our bugle blow, and even has to stand guard mount. One of the boys held him in the office the other day while we were lined up, and he tried to jump through the window. After we had gone up the street the fellow brought him outside, and he howled so much that the fellow had to let him go. He came down the road after us just as fast as he could run.

When I come home we'll have to go out fishing, or else play golf. Can you beat Braden yet? If you can't you won't be able to beat me, and then we'll have to go fishing.

Have to stop as there are a bunch of Officers here.

Your brother
Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France

Hillscheid, Germany.
May 10, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got the letter, papers, and candy. The candy was all broken, but that didn't hurt the eating of it any. Also got Elsie Mae's letter, and will answer it after supper.

Just came back from a ball game. We played the Ammunition Train, and lost 3-2. It was sure a peach of a game.

It is so hot now that a blouse almost smothers a person. Has been for four days, but don't know how long it will last.

Got the book some time ago, and quite a few of the fellows have read it.

While at the ball game I overheard one of the Officers say that no passes would be issued after the 14th. Looks like something is coming off soon.

There is to be a parade in London on the 24th, led by General Pershing. There is to be one company out of each regiment in the Division to go. As there will only be a regiment in the parade we will have a battalion or 1/3 of the number. It is said that they will go from there to the states, and that we are to go at the same time.

Read the Peace Treaty through in yesterday's paper, and if Germany signs it she'll be in a class with Mexico. But if she

doesn't sign it, it will be worse than ever next time, so I think she'll finally come to it. I expect she'll put it off until the last possible moment though, and raise a holler about things until then.

But as soon as the Treaty is signed I expect to start for home. Think I'll be discharged by August.

Must go to supper now, so will close. Am taking all kinds of pictures of the country here. Will bring all the negatives back.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany
May 14, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got your letter and the papers of the 17th and 24th this morning. At half past one every outfit in the Sanitary Train had to go out to the drill field. One of the boys in A.C. 13 got a Croix de Guerre. Another fellow out of A.C. 2 was supposed to get one, but he wasn't there.

Received a letter from Knox day before yesterday. He was at Bordeaux, and all ready to sail. Said he didn't know how soon he would leave.

Our New Y.M.C.A. opens up to-night. The 6th Division is giving a show, and there is to be hot chocolate by the "Y." afterwards. There are two "Y" women with us now; came yesterday. They came here when the 32nd, to which they were attached, went home.

The Division ball team played the Second Division yesterday, and won 7-5. General Pershing was over to see the game, and another rumor started. It is claimed that he said the First would go home when he did. Suppose it is all rumor, as usual. However, I think the Germans will sign the Peace Treaty, and then we will all go home. If they don't, why naturally we will stay here.

Must close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12

A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
May 15, 1919.

Dear sister:

Will get you some pictures of Coblenz one of these days. Am going in after some beer to-morrow, but won't have time to do anything else.

Am putting a two mark bill and a picture in here. The picture is of Rex, the company mascot. He was taken away from a German officer at Soissons. He was run over last November, and had his hind leg broken; but is alright now. We are going to try to take him to the states with us.

Guess I'll put five more pictures in this letter. They aren't very good, but they are the best I have left.

Be sure and write me again.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729 1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
May 23, 1919.

Dear Dad:

Got your letter of the 5th yesterday. Could do nothing from this end on a claim such as mine, so did not send in the affidavits. I know of two boys who have put in because of sickness in the family, and have never heard a word. Their affidavits were perfectly good, and I have seen some of their personal letters; but they have been unable to do anything. As for myself I would much rather come home with the outfit anyway. If Peace is signed I still expect to be home by August. If it isn't signed we will move into Germany. Have been prepared to do so for the last three or four days.

All of the Divisions except the First, Second, and Third, are already on their way back, and are to (*be) out of the A. of A. by June 1st. According to the New York Herald (Paris edition), the War Dept. says there will be no A. of A. within

six weeks; and that all troops will be out of the Coblenz region by June 23rd. If we leave here by that time I see no reason why we should be kept in Europe. It is generally understood now that we will be the last to leave for the states. At a base-ball game the other day, General Pershing told the First and Second that they would go home with him. We still think that we will parade in Washington.

It is pretty hot over here now. Winter ended all of a sudden. One day there was snow, and the next we were roasting. We've been roasting ever since. The days are also pretty long. You can still read at nine o'clock, and one of the boys who does guard told me that it begins to get light about half past three. On the shortest night of the year the sun sets and rises only seven hours apart, and there is light longer than that.

Friday is hike day. I thought we would go to Stolzenfels today but nothing doing. We went through Ehrenbreitstein last Friday. It certainly was some Fortress too. I want to go through Stolzenfels before we leave here, but may not get a good chance. Passes to Aix-Ies-Bains, Nice, Menton, Monaco, etc., are ended, and I didn't get to go. Passes are still open to England and Belgium; but you have to show five hundred francs, and I only draw one hundred sixty. Routh went to Brussels, and came back broke in ten days. He spent a day at Waterloo while there.

Will close for this time. Before you get this we will probably be farther from Coblenz, don't know which direction until the 29th. Hope it isn't farther into Germany, and don't think it will be.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

May 26, 1919
Hillscheid, Germany.

Dear Mother:

Nothing has happened so far. Had an alert for a couple of days, but as the time for signing the Peace Treaty was extended, it was called off. Suppose we'll have another one when it really is signed.

Have heard nothing about going home, and I expect to get my second service stripe, which is due July 13th. If Peace is signed we ought to start home by the last of July though.

Are having shows pretty often nowadays. The Sixth Marines put one on last night that was a lot better than some I've seen in the states. Don't think there is anything on for to-night.

Got the two boxes of candy about a week ago. One box, was all melted to-gether, but the other was in fine condition.

Sent home a jar the other day. Hope you get it. They say that a whole carload of them have been shipped from the Division. I know a lot of the boys are sending them.

Am enclosing part of the "History of the First Division". It is being printed in the Division paper. Will send the rest of it as it is printed. Am also sending a one franc bill.

No mail is to be censored after June 1st. However, the censorship never bothered me. Of course, we all feel a lot better when we can seal our own letter, though.

We can always tell over here when a boat arrives from the States. For three or four days, or maybe a week, there isn't any mail at all; and then one day there will be a whole sack full. So when we get mail we always get about a week's bunch of letters.

Well, as I said before, there isn't a thing to write about, so will close.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12.
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
June 7, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Have heard nothing more about going home. Last we heard, there are to be 200,000 here in Sept., and that means that this Division will be here at that time. Consequently, I guess the only chance of my getting home is through a discharge. Three of our fellows reported to St. Aignon last to be sent home and discharged. They sail from Marseille now, and stop off at Gibraltar and the Azores. Go on passenger steamers with civilians, and I suppose they are discharged as soon as they land.

Don't know what is wrong with Fritz. Knox has received no answer to his letters, and Eloise Miner is in the same boat. I have written him four letters, and have received answers to none of them. There must be something wrong, or else he would answer. Don't know what it could be though.

Knox should have been in the States some time ago. He was already to sail when I got his last letter, which must have been three weeks ago.

Haven't had much drilling to do this week. It started raining Monday, and rained continually until to-day. Sun came out this morning, and as it is Saturday, we had to stand inspection this morning. Would a good deal rather stand inspection than go out with a full pack, pitch tents, etc. We march out about half past eight, and pitch tents. Lay out our stuff for full field inspection, and then get litters. Have a little litter drill, and then the little guys are detailed as patients. We go out over the hill to where they are lying, bandage them, bring them in, and explain why we did what we did for what was wrong with them. Then take off the bandages, put the litters away, and have foot drill for half an hour. Then strike tents and get back about half past eleven. Nothing in the afternoon. Rauth is going on one day pass to Cologne tomorrow. I have put in for the next one that comes in, but suppose they will stop them. I got beat out of passes to both Neuwied and Aix-les-Bains that way.

Bolmer went on a First Division special to Aix-les-Bains, but the train landed them in Nice instead. He was down there for seven days, and had quite a time.

The Sanitary Train played the Second Sanitary Train (2nd Div.) to-day. We lost 4-3 in the tenth inning. There is a ball game someplace almost every day now. And there are some good games too.

Don't know what they are trying to do at that Peace Conference. A little while ago the U.S. thought the terms too strict, but France and England said that they were too easy. And now England and France want to modify them and the U.S. says no. I don't see why they don't get the thing over with, and quit postponing it the way they are doing. But still, they may know what they are doing, which is a good deal more than I know. I certainly hope they do anyway.

But the only thing I'm worrying about, is whether I'll get back in time for school next Sept. I certainly hope so, but doubt it.

Must stop. The place is full of officers, and I've got some work to do.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart

Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Date June 26, 1919
A.P.O. 729
City None

Dear Mother:

Left Hillscheid on the 19th and came up here to within five kms. of the neutral zone. Have been camped here in a clover field ever since that time. Got orders this morning to return to Hillgert; but the orders were later revoked, and we are still here this evening. The artillery moved back this afternoon, so I expect we will go back to-morrow. If we do, it will probably be to Hillscheid. As the Germans have declared their intention of signing the Treaty the troops have already started moving towards home. The Fifth Division is to be in Brest by Tuesday, and the Fourth is to start for that port two days later. Suppose we will be the last to leave, and as there is to be a Division Circus at Montabaus on the 11th & 12th we will be here at that time. However, if Peace is signed soon, we expect to be on our way home within a month of that date. Certainly hope we will.

The Dutchmen at Hillscheid said up to the last minute that we wouldn't leave that place, and I guess they were pretty well surprised when we pulled out. Perhaps the men were glad to see us go, but the majority of the women cried when we left. The old lady where we stayed cried for half an hour before we left, and I know of lots of others who did the same thing. In fact, most of us had regular homes there. But we expect to go back for about another month, and then I hope we leave this place for good.

This alert has been a regular picnic. The Y.M.C.A. has come out with Fords full of cocoa and doughnuts, and has brought out the papers every day. The K.C. has brought stuff of all kinds, and traveling commissaries come around with every thing in the line of candy and cigarettes. The chow is good, and we have no work to do. There is a little guard to do at night, and calisthenics each morning, but aside from that we have the rest of the time to ourselves.

Got a letter from Eloise, and she said that Knox was coming home that evening. She had also heard that Fritz was on his way home; but she hasn't had a letter from him for a month, so doesn't know for sure. He may step in on the town any day, and

I expect to come time in August. If I get there in time for school I'll be satisfied, but hope I'll have a couple of weeks to rest up in.

Stopped for about ten minutes. A "Y" Ford came around with some chocolate ice cream, and as ice cream of any kind is pretty hard to get, I didn't intend to lose out. It was pretty good, the only trouble being that there wasn't enough by a long ways. Have had ice cream three times before this since I left the States. When I get back I'll have to make up for lost time, but I'll be perfectly able and willing to. I also intend to make up a little time with the car. I haven't even sat in the driver's seat of a car since I enlisted. So I'll have plenty to do if I get home a couple of weeks early.

Guess I'll have to close as it's getting dark, and it's some job writing in a pup tent with a candle for light.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
July 1, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got your letter and papers of the 13th. See that the paving job is going to be done, and am certainly glad. I never knew how bad the roads in the States were until I came over here. Just ask Knox about them. Practically every road in France and Germany has a crushed rock foundation, and there is a force of men working on them all the year round. The roads here are in the worst condition they have been in on account of the heavy traffic. Three ton trucks and tractors don't improve roads. But the roads here are in better condition right now than the Wayne county roads are at any time during the year.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wooley (train commander) gave a talk to the whole Sanitary Train this afternoon. He said the Division starts for Brest on the 22nd, and the last train-load is to be out of Germany by the 27th. So expect we'll sail in the early part of August. He also said that all emergency men would be discharged by Sept. 1st. According to that I'll just about get home in time for school. Would like to get home a couple of weeks earlier, but I guess there is no chance.

How does it happen that Fritz was sent back? I had heard that he was already on his way home, and was expecting to hear that he was home already.

They are now asking for volunteers for the 39th Infantry. It is to stay and police up after the Third Army is all gone. None of that for me.

Well, must close. Nothing of interest. Has been raining every day for two weeks.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.

July 1, 1919.

Dear sister:

I'm coming home one of these days. The Captain said last night that our next pay day would be in the states, and we get paid the 30th of each month. We think that we will leave Hillscheid in about two weeks. We will go straight to Brest, and then take a ship to New York. If we do I think I'll be home in Wayne by the middle of August. Even if we don't leave here in two weeks, we will start home some time this month. That is what General Mc Glachlin says, and I guess he knows.

Am sending you some more post-cards of Cologne. I'll try and get some more pictures before I leave.

Ralph.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
A.P.O. 729
1st Div.
Am. Ex. Forces
France.

Hillscheid, Germany.
July 8, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got the letter and paper of the 22nd. Wasn't expecting another so soon, as I just got the last one a week ago to-day, and you have been sending them two weeks apart.

It would be pretty hot here if it would stop raining. However, I expect to see it rain until the day we leave. It has rained most of the time since I came over here.

Why don't you make Dad lay off for awhile? He always has been working too hard, and hasn't had a bit of time for anything else. And nobody is going to starve to death if he takes a vacation. Why don't you make him go off to a lake or someplace and rest up for a couple of weeks at least? It would do you both good. Make John take care of the kids if they can't take care of themselves yet.

We went to Montabaur yesterday morning. The whole Division had it's picture taken together. Made quite a bunch. We left here at six o'clock and got back about one. I was well satisfied, as I hardly expected them to take the picture before two o'clock.

According to an order which came into the office we are to get another star on our victory badge. It is for our second time in the Argonne. We only got one because both times we were in the same offensive. It started Sept. 26 and lasted until Nov. 11, and we were in it twice during that time.

Must close and mail this letter in time to get it out to-day.

Ralph.

Hillscheid, Germany
July 12, 1919.

Dear sister:

I got your letter a couple of days ago, but have not had time to answer it before.

I am sending you a few things in this letter. The pictures were taken when we were camped out in the fields a while ago. No. 1 is a picture of our trucks and ambulances. No. 2 is of our tents. No. 3 is down at the swimming hole. No. 4 is the chow line. No. 5 is one of the boys in front of his tent. No. 6 is another view of the tents. My tent is the one on the left. I've put a little mark there. No. 7 is the bugler. He has a French trumpet. No. 8 shows the hill back of the camp which is about 500 feet high. No. 9 shows one of our boys giving our dog a bath.

Then I'm sending a poster of the circus which was yesterday and to-day. I went over yesterday. I'll tell you about that when I get home. Then the things called bucks are what you have to buy to get into the shows. They cost a mark apiece.

I just came back from the offices. Had to fill out a slip saying where I wanted travel pay to when I got back to the States.

Ralph.

Hillscheid, Germany
July 23, 1919.

Dear Sister:

Got your letter yesterday, and was very glad to get it as it was the first in two weeks. Was awfully glad to get the papers too.

I don't know when I will be home. Orders have been changed again, and the First Division is to stay over here. Now that the Second Division has gone, we are the only ones on this side of the Rhine. We have spread out, and are occupying all of the territory held by the Second. There are only four companies here in Hillscheid now. The other four have moved to Sayn. Our heavy artillery (5th Field) is in Ehrenbreitstein, and a machine gun outfit is in Hohn. Part of our infantry is way back behind us a Vallendar.

They have started a replacement camp at Montabaur. 9,000 replacements are coming to the Division to replace men who have dependents and compulsory allotments. But they will never get down as far as me in replacing.

One of my friends left for home yesterday. He lives at Lena, Wisconsin, which is up near Green Bay someplace. He came over at the same time I did. He has a crippled brother to take care of, and his mother died about three months ago. He wrote to his Congressman about it and got a discharge.

The 8th Infantry is in Coblenz. They are to be the permanent Army of Occupation. They have been over here for more than six months, but were at Brest all of the time.

Am putting some pictures in this letter. No. 1 is Rex, the company's dog. No. 2 is out at the drill field. We had just finished tent pitching and were getting ready to come back to town. No. 3 is Sergeant Gandy and Rex. No. 4 is a "weinie dog" which belongs to Frau Schneider. No. 5 shows one of the boys on guard, and No. 6 is one of our Ford ambulances.

All of our regular army officers are being transferred out of the Sanitary Train to some other outfit, and we are getting Reserve Officers. That looks a little like going home as all Reserve Officers must be discharged by Sept. 30. If the Senate

would ratify the Peace Treaty I think we would start moving, but the way it is I don't know what we will do. Am hoping for the best though.

Ralph.

Hillscheid, Germany.

July 25, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Got the papers day before yesterday, and have answered Elsie Mae's letter. Haven't anything else to do this morning, so thought I might as well write.

Did Dad ever put in for a discharge from that end? If he did I have never heard from it. Wish he had, as I probably (*would) have gotten out.

Instead of coming home as a Division they are sending us replacements. There are 9,000 coming and I doubt if that will reach down as far as me as there are about 25,000 in the Division at the present time. That only takes about one third of the men, so my chances are slim. The first men to be relieved are those with dependents or distress in the family. Then come the men with allotments, and that doesn't leave very many of us. So my chances of getting replaced are practically nothing. The replacements started this morning. Nine of our men left for the States, and the men who replace them come Sunday. But there are still a bunch left who are in for discharge on ground of dependents. They may replace all of them with the next bunch though. Can't tell as it depends on how many replacements we get. All told the Sanitary Train get 600 replacements, and as there are 800 men in it there are 200 of us who won't be replaced. And as I have no dependents, allotment or anything I'll probably be one of the 200.

Am putting in a paper giving me authority to wear two stars on the Victory ribbon. Got one this morning which says I can wear three, so this one is no good. Put it up in my drawer.

Hope that stuff I sent to John got home all right. Have some more things here that I'll send right after pay day. Takes money to buy stamps, and I haven't any just now. Spending this money is an easy matter. A hundred marks goes about as easily as a dollar in the States. If a person was found over here who could really save his money they'd put him in a glass cage and stick him in a museum. It can't be done that's all. I always manage to make mine run from one pay day to the next, but at the end I've got about as much as I have now - six marks. Pay day is only a couple of days off though, so I'll be able to hold out. And as soon as pay day comes I'll send that stuff.

Ralph.

Hillscheid, Germany.
July 31, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got your letter of the 11th. Got the news yesterday that we will leave for the states on the 15th. To-day's paper says that we will be turned over to the S.O.S. in the 5th, on next Tuesday. That means we will turn in our cars and all extra stuff between then and the 15th, and will be given a physical exam. We will be all fixed out here and will climb from the train on to the ship instead of stopping at Brest for from a day to two weeks as the other outfits did. So with good luck I should be discharged, and be in Wayne along about the 1st of Sept. Should be there before the 15th at any rate.

If I run out of money will send home for more, but think I'll probably have enough. Haven't received this month's pay yet, and I'm going to save as much of it as I possibly can. But, of course, I may want a few more souvenirs or something. You can never tell.

Field Hospital 13 is to stay over here. They move to Coblenz and will operate there. All of the men who enlisted for the Army of Occupation are to be transferred to it, and the emergency men are to be sent home with us.

Well, guess I'll have to quit. Have four more letters to answer, and have some work to do.

Ralph.

Aug. 4, 1919

Dear Mother:

According to yesterday's "Amaroc" the "Stars and Stripes" is to be published in the States under the name "The Home Sector". It will be edited by the same bunch, and published by the firm that publishes "Adventure". If you can find out about it, please subscribe to it for a year for me. First number comes out Aug. 15th.

Ralph.

Hillscheid
Aug. 7, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Just got off guard. Went on at noon yesterday. Was a good day, no rain or anything, so it wasn't nearly as bad as might be. Won't be on again for about a week.

Seems as though the days ought to go awfully slow, especially now that we know we are going home but instead, they go just as fast as ever. Are having picture shows every night now, and there is always a volley ball game going until dark, so we have some entertainment at least.

The Colonel was over from Sayn this morning and made a recruiting speech. He got rather eloquent when he began to talk of the hardships of civil life in the States, and made some pretty big statements. Said it was impossible to get a pair of shoes for less than \$18, and a suit for less than \$60. Of course, nobody said anything then, but they sure did afterwards. Three men from the company re-enlisted for another year, and I suppose they will be sent to field Hospital 13 which is to stay over here. It started operating in Coblenz last week.

The Colonel also announced that the Sanitary Train would leave here on the 18th, 19th, or 20th. So if we make as good time as the 2nd Division (20 days), we ought to be in New York by the 10th of Sept., and I would get home about the 15th.

Am putting a half mark piece in this letter. It is the first I've been able to get, as they are harder to find than three or five mark piece. Have been unable to get a one mark piece at all.

Must close till next time.

Ralph.

P.S. If you can, find out from Prof. Armstrong what subjects I will have to take, and what I will have my choice of. He will probably be willing to look it up and make out a list, and it will save me some time.

Camp Mills, L.I.
Sept. 1, 1919.

Dear Mother:

On this side at last. You will know it before this letter reaches you, as I intend to send a night letter to-morrow night for a little money. Will tell you about our trip.

We left Hillscheid on the 20th, and hiked to Neider Beibes. Took the train there at eleven A.M., and arrived in Brest the morning of the 23rd. Went thru the delouser that afternoon and

climbed on the "Von Steuben" the next morning. Left Brest at 1:00 P.M. and had a peach of a trip. Landed at Hoboken at noon to-day, but reached here at 9:00 o'clock last night. The Red Cross gave us a fine dinner at the docks and then we loaded on a ferry and went over to Queens. From there electric trains brought us out here. Had a fine supper and are going through the delouser at 11:30 to-night. (9:00 now) That finishes up to date.

This sure is a fine camp. There are three post exchanges, three "Y's", a Red Cross, J.W.B., A.L.A., two K.C.'s, a Liberty Theatre, and a big recreation hall. As soon as we are deloused we can go where we please. New York is a 45 min. ride and there are all kinds of fine towns around here.

You probably know that we are to parade in both New York and Washington. In New York on the 9th or 10th. Immediately after we leave for Camp Meade and parade in Washington about the 16th. Let me know if there is any possible chance of your coming to the Washington parade. I know it will be pretty hard, but if there is any chance I want you to be there. It is going to be some parade. We are going to be issued exactly what we had on the front, and will parade full-pack. We also get our ambulances, the artillery their guns, etc., so you can imagine 30,000 men with all of their stuff. Will be at least 10 miles long unless they make the cars go four abreast. So if there is any possible chance, be sure and come.

Brewer has gone home already. The pier where we landed is just 8 blocks from his home, so he took his pack and all and beat it. Don't know when he'll be back to camp; but he told the Captain he was going, so he's alright.

This parade kind of knocks school in the head. I won't be discharged now for another month, but I think I can make it up. Better ask Prof. about it, and let me know. If he thinks I'll be able to make it up why it's alright. If he doesn't think I can do it, I'll have to go to work until Christmas time, and take six subjects the last half of the year. And if I'll have to work why see what kind of jobs there are around home. I don't want to go on the farm, and I wouldn't want to go out of town for work if there is any to be had at home. So find out about these things and let me know. Also let me know about the parade. Address me:

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart
Amb. Co. No. 12
1st Div.
Camp Mills, Long Island, N.Y.

Pelham Bay
Sept. 5, 1919.

Dear Mother:

Left Camp Mills on the second and came over here. Are in the Pelham Bay Naval Training Camp. It has been closed as a Naval Camp and was opened up for us. We can't get out of here until five in the evening, and then only if you have a pass. There is absolutely nothing here in camp, and the chow is getting worse every day. At night everyone who can gets a pass and goes over to City Island to get a square meal. Naturally it costs us quite a bit of money, but it's that or not enough chow. City Island is a little burg on a small island just across from the camp. Your (*You) reach it by a bridge about 300 yds. long. Nothing there but one movie show, so you see what kind of entertainment we are able to get. Of course you can get a 24 hour pass to N.Y., but that costs a good deal, as usual.

Went to New York yesterday to draw ambulances for the parade. Got 37. Had to go clear through the city, and it took quite a while. Left here at 7:00 in the morning, and by the time we had the cars in condition to run, and got back here it was five o'clock. Had to buy our own dinners too.

Sent a telegram last night saying that I needed a little money. Suppose you have received it by this time. Am hoping for an answer before night.

Ralph.

Address.

Pvt. Ralph M. Carhart

Amb. Co. #12

1st Div.

Pelham Bay Naval Training Station.

Pelham Bay

N.Y.

(*End of letter series).