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A Brief History of

OLD CO. G

in

The Great War

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A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF  
APPLETON'S  
"OLD COMPANY G"  
(Co. A, 150th Machine Gun Battalion)

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WITH THE  
RAINBOW DIVISION  
IN THE  
GREAT WAR

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Compiled from Letters written to his Mother by  
LIEUTENANT ALLAN B. ELLIS

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FEB 27 1919

Dedicated to  
The Mothers, Wives and Sweethearts  
of the Boys of  
Old Company G

## EXPLANATION AND APPRECIATION

BY MAJOR BYRON BEVERIDGE

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That the Rainbow Division was regarded as one of the "shock" divisions of the American army is plainly shown by the manner in which the 150th Machine Gun Battalion, to which Old Company G was attached, was shifted from one fighting front to another.

A "shock" division consists of veteran troops which are rushed from one front to the other by rail, by trucks or by forced marches either to surprise the enemy who may think himself opposed by green troops, or to weaken the morale of the enemy. This latter effect is achieved by the sudden appearance before him of troops who have defeated him in the past and whom he believed to be on another front. Divisions which do not come under the classification of "shock" troops are usually held in one particular sector or moved gradually from one sector to another as the fighting front changes and shifts.

We, of the Thirty-Second Division, give the Rainbows credit for having put up a wonderful fight. They fought on as many fronts as any American division, in fact only one or two divisions saw action on as many fronts as did the Rainbows. They added to the glory of the National Guard of the country, for it was a strictly National Guard division, made up of the national guard from various states, and proved beyond all argument that the National Guard from all parts can depended upon to do its full duty.

For the part played by Captain Graef's company we, who have seen numerous other machine gun companies in action and know the important part they play as well as the great dangers they encounter, have nothing but praise.

While at the First Corps School last spring the writer met a machine gun instructor of the school's staff who had just returned from spending a week in the trenches with Captain Graef. In speaking of him the instructor said: "He is an excellent officer, has his men well in hand and is popular with them. He has a habit of walking through the trenches and jollyng the men when they are under fire which has an excellent effect in keeping their spirits up."



## THE LAST DAYS OF THE WAR

Dear Mother:

November 22, 1918.

Well! When I got back from Machine Gun school I found Captain Graef in command of the battalion, Major Smith having gone to hospital —. On my return, however, Captain Graef had me report back to the old company and I've been there ever since and I can't say I'm a bit sorry for the change, either. The work was very exciting for a while, but I had the satisfaction of assisting at the beginning of the last great American drive of the war and besides that, of being in at the finish of the same drive, for my platoon was supporting the advanced battalion of the old "fighting 69" (see STARS and STRIPES) when that organization was relieved by the French in front of Sedan on the morning of the 8th of November and my guns were relieved by the Machine Gun company of the 150th French Infantry—quite a coincidence. We had three days of "honest to God" hard work previous to that day, chasing Fritz as hard as we could push.

I was fortunate enough to be one of the first American officers in two of the villages we captured and I tell you none of the stuff the papers have to say about the people's joy at being delivered is a particle overdrawn.

August Arens is reading a long German article out loud which intimates that Fritz had a lot of trouble with sick horses a short time ago. We are in a barracks, built by the French and occupied by the Germans till recently. They sure left it dirty but 'tis far enough behind the former lines to be intact and that's a great relief after living in "Fox holes" and ruins for two weeks. I have a whole hide and don't think anyone can say I haven't always been where I was supposed to be at all times. Every one feels, that the Guerre est finis and I can't see how Fritz can possibly come back, crooked as he is.

I have a number of souvenirs, mostly papers, a Hun flag from the St. Mihiel salient, a couple of belt buckles, etc. Things are going nicely, clothing, food and equipment aplenty since we left the zone of combat. Nothing to worry about—not even subs on the way home.

Each of the last three days has been full of interest. On the 20th we got into that portion of France where there was absolutely no sign of war, no shell holes, no ruined buildings, only numerous marks of German occupancy—billeting marks on house doors, steel signs and filth. The church, a wonderful Gothic cathedral, built in the 14th century, had been used as a stable!

At 3 o'clock the people gave the officers of the battalion a reception in the Ecole. On our arrival a girl garbed in white with a tricolor sash over her shoulder, presented Captain Graef with a huge bouquet. Several of the other officers were also given bouquets. We went into the school where the mayor made a speech, Captain Graef responded, the Marsellaise and Marche Lorraine were sung and toasts drunk to Amerique and La Belle France. I can't describe the ceremony, so heartfelt and simple and so very moving. No young men, only grey beards, women, girls and children.

The next day, the 21st, we entered Belgium, were played in by one of the regimental bands. Every house in every town flew the tricolors of France and Belgium and the Stars and Stripes. I can't describe how touching it was to me to see the pitiful attempts of these war torn people to manufacture that beautiful flag. Some had the stripes vertical, some had no stars in the union, some only four or five round circles of white and now and Allan then appeared with one obviously hand made, yet perfect in every detail.



**CAPT. LOTHAR G. GRAEF**

Commanding Company G and part of time 150th Machine  
Gun Battalion.

## COMPANY G IN FRANCE

Boevange, Luxemburg, Nov. 28, 1918.

Dear Mother:—The Censorship regulations have been revised so much so that a whole year's operation is open to me as a theme. I will, however, confine myself in my movements, which are largely those of the Battalion, and touch on some of the more important incidents of this most eventful year. Inasmuch as this is Thanksgiving Day and the orders covering the censorship only arrived last night, we have much to be thankful for. We have no turkey for dinner, but we have managed pretty well notwithstanding. Following is our menu—Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes with Brown Gravy, Creamed Carrots, Bread and Butter, Coffee, Coffee Cake. The coffee cake is the piece de resistance. Our own cooks bake it to perfection—using Luxemburg yeast. We have that very necessary adjunct to good baking—a warm room to raise the sponge.

NOW—We embarked on the U.S.S. Covington (afterwards torpedoed) on the 18th of October 1917, passing the three mile limit on the morning of the 19th. Arrived at St. Nazaire on the morning of November 1st.

On November 6 we entrained having spent the intervening days on board ship. We detrained November 8 at Savor (near Vancoulers) marched to Boyee via Broussey (headquarters Department only, Co. B went to Broussey, Co. C to Maligny Le Grand, Co. A to Vacon.) We were met at the detraining point by Major Conway, the Brigade Adjutant, who broke our hearts by announcing that General Headquarters had decided to break up Machine Gun Battalions and give each Infantry Battalion a Machine Gun company. We were scattered on this account. Battalion Headquarters and each company being billeted with the Infantry battalion to which it was planned it would be united. We were within hearing of the guns of St. Mihiel and saw air fights quite frequently. We have laughed at our condition many times since, inasmuch as we had neither gas masks or helmets and were within a zone where their wearing was later rigidly enforced. On November 25 Major Hall, the three Captains and the senior 1st Lieutenant of each company went to 1st Corps school at Gondrecourt. This left me the senior Officer and nominally in command of the Battalion.

The entire division moved on December 12. Company A and Battalion Headquarters going to Amanty (headquarters via Broussey, Villeroy, Mau, Vages, Rozieres and Badonviller). December 13 we marched to Brechainville via Gondrecourt, Dainville and Grand. Here we had our Christmas though we didn't get our packages till later.

December 26 we marched to Ozieres via Alliauvville (where we picked up Company B, Co. A and Headquarters being together). Lafouche, Pres sous La Fouche, Semilly, Chalvaraines and Clinchamp. December 27 we marched to Bannes via Montigny Le Roy, Ferme de Chezoy and Frecourt. December 29—marched to Villiers les Aprey via Langers, St. Geosmes, Bourg, Longeau, and Baissey—At Villiers les Aprey we were rejoined by the officers who had been at school and on January 1 got our machine guns and mule carts (24 per company), 12 guns and 4 spare guns per company. Also got our Christmas mail and packages and the news that the battalions were to remain as independent units. All this time we were more or less under the infantry and it was more or less unpleasant. (Langres was the "fairy city" I described. It's on a high hill and was covered with a frost when we first saw it. Here are located the army schools and here I attended Machine Gun school in October.)

On January 22 Headquarters and Company A marched to Flagey via Baissey, Co. B to Flagey from le Havt, Co. C remaining at Areevaux. This consolidated things so that our training went on with number one speed. Here Company A 149th Machine Gun Battalion (Co. I 4th Penna.) was attached to us and later on assigned, making our battalion one of four companies. It becoming Co. D 150th Machine Gun Battalion stationed at Bourg.

It would appear that pressure must have been applied as we were not expecting orders to go to trenches until March 1st. However—this movement was begun on February 18, the Battalion traveling by rail—Joe Marston and I went in the Battalion side-car going on the 18th to Luneville via St. Geosmos, Langres, Clefmont, Neufchateau, Mirecourt, Tentonville, Hardue, Bayon Haussonville and Blainville. We stayed at the Y.M.C.A. in Luneville overnight and in the morning being misdirected went to Moriviller, then back to Luneville where we got straightened out and found the new station Giriviller, getting there by way of Gerbeviller and Serainville.

Gerbeviller has been given some prominence in the states. Several magazine articles having been written about it. Fritz burned it for spite and people in California are rebuilding. Frits did a good job—so did the Californians. However, Jacques insists on decorating the front yards of the pretty bungalows with his marks of prosperity—dung heaps.

Giriviller was Battalion headquarters for some time. A and B companies going into the trenches near Luneville (Rouge Bouquet Sub Sector, the 165th Infantry (69th New York) and C and D Companies near Benaminil (to get to Company P.C. we rode from Benaminil to Blemercy via Domjevik) with the 166th (4th Ohio). Between Blemerey and Domoevin I had my first experience with shell fire and gas. Not dangerous but interesting.

On March 10 Headquarters went to Benaminil by truck via Mattexey, Magnieres, Moyon, Vathemenil and Chenevieres.

On March 22 Battalion Headquarters moved to Laronxe via Chenevieres and St. Clement and went back to Giriviller via Chenevieres, Moyon, Vallois, and Serainville, on the 23rd. Here the Battalion was assembled and all plans made for a grand maneuver march back to the old training area (Battalion headquarters at Flagey) but the Hun offensive had begun. Pershing offered the French the use of all American troops and we took over the Baccarat sector as a division holding it, as you know 110 days, and being the first American division to hold a divisional sector. (When we first went in each of our four Infantry Regiments had a Battalion in line with a French Battalion sandwiched in between French 1 Battalion 165th, French 1 Battalion 166th, French 1 Battalion 167th, French 1 Battalion 168th.

On March 29 the Battalion moved to Domptail in Mattexey Magnieres and St. Pierremont. This march was the first to be made by the complete Battalion (4 companies) as a unit. Here Company D was attached to the Infantry, the balance of the Battalion marching on the 31st, to Brouville via Fontenoy La Joute, Glonville and Azerailles. The other three companies left Brouville one by one to join the Infantry Battalion to which they were attached for trench service and on the 18th of April Headquarters went to the next village Merviller where Brigade Headquarters was located. Here we remained for two months attached to Brigade Headquarters while the 165th and 166th alternated in line and division reserve and the Regiment in line alternated its battalions in line support and reserve. My work was interesting. Besides doing my routine work (I was relieved of the Supply Officer duty by Proudfit at Browville) I did aide-de-camp work inspecting

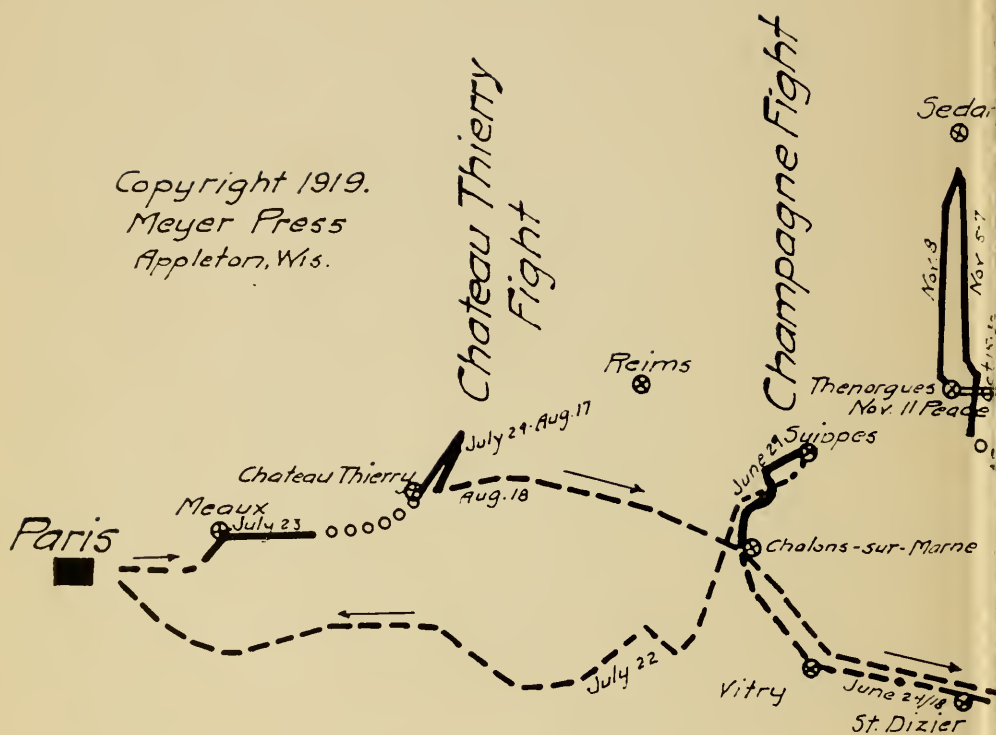


LIEUT. ALLAN B. ELLIS

Adjutant 150th Machine Gun Battalion and part of time  
Commanding Company G

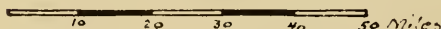


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- ==== Marched after signing of Armistice
- Marched
- Moved by Train
- ..... Moved by Camion (French Trucks)

Scale





front line trenches—the towns where the Brigade was billeted, etc. (Just had dinner. Am “full-up” as Louis Lozier used to say. We had jelly-roll and a bottle of 1911 Rhine wine donated by August’s (Lt. Arens’) landlady in honor of the occasion).

We pulled out of Baccarat area around the 18th of June—on that day I went ahead in side cars to Romont via Baccarat, Rambervillers to billet for Battalion and Brigade headquarters. On the 19th I went on to Moriville to billet.

On the night of the 21-22 I went back to Merviller by truck to pick up a number of non-combatants we had left with the 77th division (New York’s own) who had relieved us, as instructors in automatic weapons, and returned the night of the 22nd.

On the 23rd we marched to Chatel sur Moselle where we entrained Hq. C and D on one train. San. Det. A and B on the other. After this all train movements were by sections Headquarters A and B on one San. Department C and D on the other. We went by rail to Champagne, detrained June 24 at a place called Coolus (near Chalons) marched via Mairy to Togny aux Boeufs. Here it was planned to drill and have maneuvers but we marched on the night of the 28-29 to a camp in the big maneuver ground “Camp de Chalons” known as “Camp Tombeau des Sarrazins” (Camp of the Sarcens Tomb). Via Mary sur Marne, Sarry-Chalons, St. Etienne au Temple and St. Hillaire au Temple. This latter place we will never forget. We got to know it better later. Camp Tombeau is where we had the photos taken and saw our first tanks (in demonstration).

It was originally planned to use the division in a huge raid on Fritz southwest of Rheims going from the Chalons area to that place by Camion but Foch got wind of the Hun plan for the offensive of July 15th and the Battalion was marched to Ferme Suippes on the night of the 3rd of July via Vadenay and Vadenay Farms. Battalion Headquarters and Brigade Headquarters stayed at this point while the companies were again attached to the Infantry Battalions. (Company A to the 2nd Battalion 165th. Company B to 3rd Battalion 165th. Company C to 2nd Battalion 166th. Company D to 3rd Battalion 166th.) On the night of the 13th we received a false alarm that the Hun attack was on and Machine Gun Headquarters moved to a splinter proof about  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilometer from the Ferme. Nothing happened and we went back to the Ferme in the A.M.

The night of the 14th (Bastille day) the word came at about 11:30 that the ball would begin at midnight, our artillery opened up and at midnight exactly, Fritz opened fire. We dug back to our hole in the ground but in the morning I went back to the dugout Brigade occupied and slept there the 16th and 17th. Here is where Companies A and B received their baptism of fire. C and D being with reserve battalions.

The night of the 18th the troops were relieved and moved back, Battalion and Brigade Headquarters going to St. Hillaire au Temple where Headquarters A and B entrained the night of the 21st. Fritz was aware of something going on and came over, and bombed us—hitting the depot and setting it afire and smashing up two cars—causing several casualties, both men and mules. Like Kipling’s skunk everything that has ever been said about bombing planes is true. Deliver me from them hereafter.

We went by train to Esbly (between Paris and Meaux) on the 22nd and on the morning of the 23rd arrived and billeted at Conde, the prettiest town I saw in France. In the afternoon of the 23rd we marched to Vaux through Meaux and La Ferte sous Jouarre, the companies rejoining their





battalions at once—moved by Camion through Charly and Vaux (another one) Chateau-Thierry and Epieds Brigade and Battalion Headquarters being at Courpoil—where I got my first belt buckle. I went by side-car. We were darn close on the heels of Fritz, his dead still lying unburied and it was rather unpleasant.

The night of the 27-28 I was used by Brigade Headquarters as aide, in fact continued under General Leniken until the Ourc affair was over. I went forward through Beauvarden to where the regiments were forming for attack then back to Beauvarden (a smelly hole—later cleaned up and used for Division Headquarters) then ahead to Chateau de La Foret. Stayed in this vicinity until the Ourc fight was over moving back several miles the night of the 29th to where the detachment was and where I met "Bev" the morning of the 30th. Back forward that morning to where we'd made a small shelter in a corner of Foret de Fere on the 28th (Chateau de la Foret is just south of Villiers sur Fere).

Marched to Chateau Moucheton the 4th of August, the troops being at the time in Foret de Fere. This is the beautiful chateau I described and is near Epieds. On the 12th the Battalion assembled at Epieds and marched to Dompnin and to Villiers sur Marne on the 13th. On the 16th we marched to Chateau-Thierry (Gare), via rail from there to Domblain where we de-trained on the 18th and marched to Vrecourt (Southeast of Neupchateau). Here we had a bath house and two days to loaf and clean up then a bit of drill and machine gun maneuver.

Well, we left Stenay the 20th, going to Auioth via Chavenay, Montmedy and Thionville. Here we had the receptional I wrote about and at last got out of the fought-over-zone.

The 21st we entered Belgium at Limes—Route, Breux, Fagny, Limes, Soye, Bellefontaine, St. Marie, Fratin. The 165th band played us over the line. November 22 we marched to Lischert via Bazenol, Chantemelle, Fouches, Loffert and Thiaumont.

The 23rd we entered Luxembourg at Oberpallen and arrived at present station. Route, Bonnert, Oberpallen, Beckerich, Huttange, Noerdange, Rippweiler, Usseldange, Buevange.

On the 26th I took a day off and went to the capital. Prices are rather steep and the rate of exchange—Francs for Marks—high, so I bought nothing in the way of souvenirs except the Madame La Guerre notices which I thought rather interesting.

On the 28th the movement to San Mihiel was begun, all marching being done at night. Schedule follows:

28th Bulgneville, 29th Viocourt, Sept. 4, Bois dela Faliere (bivouac), Sept. 5, Barizey la Cote, 7th Chaloy, 8th Bn. Hqts., to Bouc—Battalion to the woods south of Mandres and Tours (Foret de Reine) where headquarters moved the 10th.

On the 11th (at night) we went into position for the attack which began the next morning. My route during the 12th was Seichprey-St. Boissant, Mazarin, Essey, Pannes, LaMarche, Pannes. I also picked up the Boche I wrote about on my first arrival at Pannes. The next A.M. headquarters moved to LaMaiche. I going forward to St. Benoit in time to find the fires lit by the departing Boche still burning, in fact, all along the line were villages on fire. On the 14th I established an advanced P.C. for the Battalion with Captain Graef at Ferme Sebastopol south of St. Benoit. Here I stayed until the 17th when the Battalion was relieved and fell back to Bois de la Belle Ozieres southeast of Nonsard, marching by way of Beney La Marche

and Nonsard. From here I went to Machine Gun School by rail at Langres on the 26th of September, arriving at Langres the 27th.

Left Langres October 27th by rail. Arrived St. Dizier 28th. Slept until 10:00 a.m. Left that evening by rail. Arrived in the morning of the 29th at Clermont, northeast of Verdun and went by truck to Battalion Headquarters in a springhouse near Apremont that evening and spent the night there. The Battalion had moved here about the 15th by camion and foot after having done a second trick on front line near St. Benoit.

On the morning of the 30th I moved forward to Captain Graef's advanced P.C., he commanding the Battalion since the 27th of September. This was located on a hill known as Cote de Maldah about a kilometer south of Landres St. Georges. The brigade had been through hell here before we arrived, but we enjoyed our part in the attack of November 1st (as machine gunners), which consisted in assisting in a perfect hell of a barrage. Later we had the pleasure of learning that "the artillery drove the Huns out of their dugouts and the machine guns drove them back in", and still later moved from the Sedan front back over the ground which had been traversed by the barrage and found it to be as full of shell holes as the moon is of craters and every tree marked with machine gun bullets.

Immediately after the barrage ceased (it lasted from 3:30 until 5:55) we packed up and fell back—mighty glad to do so too. Two days in a fox hole was bad enough and the Battalion had been there 21 and the weather very nasty. We bivouaced near the spring house at Apremont the 1st and 2nd marching on the 3rd to Verpel via Fleville, St. Juvin and Champigneulle on the 4th to a ferme west of Brioules via Thenorgues, Briquenay, Germont, Authe, Brioules and Authe. We had to counter march through Authe on account of the road leading to our original destination (beyond Brioules) had been blown out where a ravine had been filled, some of the mine-craters being as big as a house.

On the 5th we passed through the 78th Division and began our advance on Sedan, passing through Brioules and bivouacing in a ravine in the Bois de Mont Dieu. Did no firing the first day but went into position three times. The second day, 6th, I was assigned to the 168th (69th N.Y.) as liaison officer and think I mentioned some of my experiences in a previous letter. We passed through Maisonnelle and Bulson, the advance line running through Ferme St. Quentin. I went back to the company and slept in a little grove east of Historia Ferme. The best fun I had that day was sniping at two groups of Huns with a Springfield, range 1200 yards, and making 'em hunt cover. The scuts had two guns mounted right under a white flag in a group of deserted hangars. We had come to accept the white flag as an indication of the presence of civilians and not of surrender, but the crime is in my eyes even greater. However, we made 'em hunt their holes.

On the 7th the drive on Sedan ended. I moved the Company to Ferme St. Quentin, where they shelled us. Capt. Combs was reconnoitering. Fell back a bit and later moved my platoon forward and had the satisfaction of using my two guns and three German Maxims in driving out a gang of Huns. Later relieved Lt. Crawhall on Hill 252, in easy rifle shot of Sedan. Spent the night there, nasty place, will tell you about it when I get home.

Next day, Nov. 8, the 150th French relieved us, we marched to a bivouac southeast of Maisonnelle passing through Chaumont, Bulson and Maisonnelle. the 29th we marched to La Petite Armoises via Maisonnelle, Chemery and Tannay, on the 10th to Fontenoy via Brioules and St. Pierremont.

Nov. 11 we marched to Thenorgues via Bar and Buzancy. Here we learned that evening of the signing of the armistice and our choice as one of the Divisions of the Army of Occupation.



LIEUT. AUGUST A. ARENS  
Company A, 150th Machine Gun Battalion  
Wounded in action

The 13th we marched to Landres St. Georges via Sevry, and Imecourt, where we bivouaced. The weather was cold but it was our last bivouac.

The 16th we marched to Clery le Petite via Bantheville (flat to the earth) Rinerville and Clery le Grand and the 17th Stenay via Sassey and Mouzay. Here we rested up and drew clothing and equipment and I took command of the old company. Capt. Combs going to C Company. I'll never be a captain, but I had the satisfaction of riding at the head of the old outfit when we passed into Belgium and Luxemburg. Possibly my luck will hold till we enter Hunland. The War Department has adopted a policy of making no more promotions and, of course, Captain Graef is blocked from being Major. Major Scott has just been made a Lt. Colonel. He was here a day or two ago.

## THROUGH BELGIUM AND LUXEMBURG

Boevange, Luxemburg, November 28.

These last two days have brought me "beaucoup" mail, including all that which has been forwarded me when at Langres at Machine Gun school. By the way, the name of the Fort there where we were stationed was "Constance Chiore" Auct Peigney, the Auct standing for ancient, the site being the scene of a battle between the original Huns and the Romans, in which the latter won—Fritz never entered the town in 1870 nor in 1914-18. The place is never called by its newer name, always being known as Fort Peigney. It was completed in 1875. Another point, the farm where we were quartered around July 15 in Champagne was a "stud" built by Napoleon Third, all the doors and windows had keystones of the letter "N" and over the principal door was a more ornate one.

We leave tomorrow for Fischbach, a march of 13 kilometers (eight and one-half miles), not a hard hike, and the men are in much better shape than when we started from the old French barracks at Stenay to cross Belgium and enter Luxemburg. Our march will consist of six or seven days of hiking followed by a period of rest, then hike, then rest again till we get there, our destination is in the vicinity of Coblenz.

We anticipate no trouble but are prepared for all eventualities. During the stop here we have drilled and instructed daily and will continue the work at the next stop. The men were badly in need of disciplinary drill, owing to the large percentage of replacements who seemed fated to always arrive just before a push and who had never had close order drill since arriving, but the company picked up with remarkable speed and is as well disciplined and as courteous an organization as you'd care to see. It would delight General King to see us do close-order, though the lack of rifles reduces the snappy appearance a well drilled infantry company presents. We have for brigade commander Brigadier General Caldwell, who commanded the 4th Wisconsin in '98 and was an inspector later. That puts the 42nd Division brigades under Wisconsin men. MacArthur (a "first class fighting man") having the 84th. MacArthur commanded the division for a time and Colonel Henry J. Reilly the 83rd, but the war department decision not to promote caused their return to their old outfits and they put General Flagler in command of the division.

Speaking of generals, I was with Liggett for a moment or two when on the Ourc. General Lenihan had sent me forward to an observation post to watch the attack of our brigade. I couldn't see our own, but could see the 84th brigade go through the wheat towards Sergy. It was more like a movie battle than reality. Our barrage advancing steadily, the men following at a steady walk, the Hun barrage dropping on them, many falling, the line advancing steadily and surely.



**LIEUT. L. HUGO KELLER**

Assigned to Company A, 150th Machine Gun  
Battalion in France.



I could write volumes of the wonderful old Gothic cathedral at Avioth in France near the Belgian border. And my visit to the beautiful city of Luxemburg, not as mediaeval as McCutcheon's description in "Graustark" but full of wonderful crooked streets and beautiful buildings all alive with flags, not as many allied banners as Belgian but quite a number, especially French and Belgian, and the people are friendly. Many talk English and have relatives in America. One Luxemburger told me there were 250,000 in America and only 150,000 in Luxemburg.

## IN GERMANY AT LAST

Peffingen, Rhine Province, December 3, 1918.

In Germany at last. For twenty minutes we marched beside the railroad, high cliffs on our right and on our left, beyond the tracks the rushing Sauer. Then a sharp turn to the left past the last building flying the red, white and blue of the Grand Duchy and across a bridge past our General and we were in the "enemy's country." Our march continued about two or three hours when we arrived at this little village. It took some time for Captain Graef to find the Burgomeister and make arrangements and I went forward to find Co. B billeted and the Burgomeister busy with Co. C. I was astounded to learn from Mr. Coen, the "Y" man, that the Burgomeister was putting only about half as many men in a billet as it would hold, so all the people could have some Americans! I went around with him when he billeted me and was everywhere greeted with smiles. I could have imagined myself still in Luxemburg were it not for the pictures of men in the uniform I learned to hate so on the walls. It's simply incredible, during the day I had seen very few people with scowls on their faces but hadn't been prepared for hospitality.

Sergeant Rehner arranged for a room beside the rolling kitchen for the officers' mess and the owner, only two weeks out of the army, and his son killed, himself spread a white cloth, brought us fresh bread, butter, home made prune jam, preserved apples and china plates and cutlery. And his sole resentment seems to be against the authorities who caused the war as an institution! I can't explain my feelings, they are something akin to pity.

Nieder Adenau, Germany, December 10, 1918.

Some ground we've covered since last I wrote. We're not letting the grass grow under our feet. Here follows the route:

Dec. 5—Ehlenz, via Wettlingen, Bettingen, Oberweis, Rittersdorf.

Dec. 6—Budesheim, via Schleid, Seffern, Lasel, Reuland, Wetteldorf, Hersdorf, Wallersheim.

Dec. 7—Belsdorf-Lissingen, Gerolstein, Bewingen, Dohm, Lammersdorf.

Dec. 8—Udelhoven, via Hillesheim, Weisbaum, Mirbach, Dollendorf, Ahrhutte.

Dec. 9—Nieder Adenau, via Ahrdorf, Dorsel, Musch, Antweiler, Fuchshofen, Schuld, Insul, Dumpelfeld.

My note book says Billet No. 79—that counts fox holes, etc., which are not really billets, and it don't count trains where I've slept many nights. Well, I don't expect we'll be at it much longer. We don't know our destination but we can't go much farther. We can make the Rhine from here in about three days. Our latest hunch is that we're going to or near Bonn,

which the Germans say is even prettier than Coblenz. I'd like to see the latter though, or the Rhine at least.

The people still continue to do everything to make us comfortable, though none have done quite as much as that chap at Peffingen. The official "Summary of Intelligence" seems to think this attitude is an assumed one and underneath there is a feeling of resentment which crops out when the people become excited or angry. They mention the case of a "Fraulein Grunert," late of Metz, the daughter of a Prussian officer. She left Metz on account of being bombed too much. She said the bombing planes had done a great deal of damage at Metz-Sablonsm so your wish that the terror the Huns brought to Belgium be carried back to them was partly taken care of.

The weather lately has been pretty much in our favor. Most of the time there's a fog, but we have had no snow or freezing weather. However, I expect winter will be down on us most any day now. Hope it waits till we get to our destination.

The deep ravines we encountered in Luxemburg we see no more, but we are in what I suppose they call mountains, and have climbed some hills. Roads on the whole are good, though somewhat cut up in places. No care for four years and 600,000 Germans passing over 'em don't improve roads. (I said "they call mountains." To me nothing is a mountain without snow on top.)

I have, of course, not named all the towns occupied by units of the battalion. I know nearly all of these and they will speckle up the map to satisfy anyone.

Ist Sergt. Lutz just counted up. We have 66 men and three officers in the battalion who saw service in the company on the border and sixty-five men and three officers who were on the roll when we left Camp Douglas for Camp Mills. The rest not killed are scattered all over France and some are back home.

And today has been a triumphal procession. Every town was lined with people and a mass of streamers, rows of evergreens trimmed with colored papers and ribbons, even triumphal arches, had been erected in some of the more enterprising villages. In one town a woman gave me a bit of worsted with the colors of Belgium. I wore it all day and enclose it herewith.

The men get coffee and bread as soon as they hit their billets (American Red Cross relief for the Belgians), but the Huns took the white flour we sent and gave them black bread.

The sound of the joyful cries of Vive L'Amerique and Vive les Americains still ring in my ears and how the bells pealed forth. I am repaid for my poor sacrifices.

I've got writers cramp. Have spent all day on this taking the dope from my note book. There may be a few slight errors and I didn't put down the route of march in some cases. I remember it when I see the map, however, and can straighten it up when I get home.

I suggest that you get a large scale map of France, and look the towns and routes up. Perhaps it won't interest you to do so. Anyway it's written and I'll forward it with a daisy I picked on November 6th near Haisoncelle. Am sending some other things in another envelope.

Lovingly,

ALLAN.









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