

# Downers Grove Reporter

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"And The Star Spangled Banner Forever Shall Wave, O'er The Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave."



## LETTERS FROM DOWNERS GROVE SOLDIER BOYS

### BOYS ENJOYED JULY FOURTH OVER THERE

Somewhere in France, July 14, 1918. Dear Mother:

This is the best paper I can scout up and writing conditions are poor so just the letter will have to go this time. For myself, healthy, wealthy and feeling all here. I have all your letters and am going to answer all I can without Mr. Censor taking of fence.

Our trip was very nice, only now and then a choppy sea and of course there was nothing but simply water for scenery but being new it was not tiresome. We saw very pretty scenery in England and some old historical places. Our Lieutenant took us on a sight seeing walk one morning. France is a beautiful place as far as scenery is concerned. We can get fruit and some candy to eat providing you have the required sum of centimes and francs. About the young ladies, there are none that compare with our American girls. The English girls are no good at all. The French may be prettier but that is all.

This is a religious day in France and there being no place for every domination to attend, Father Wright gave a regular free for all Sermon before the Mass so those that didn't belong to the Catholic Faith could be spiritually benefitted by the lecture. He is a very nice man to all the boys and tries to help us in every capacity.

I read your clippings now and then, and the Bible, but time is no longer with us soldiers. But Mother Dear, I will come back the same old boy of yours and be there with a bigger smile than before, for now I know what a Mother is to a soldier. "Mother" is a cherished word to them even more than God to most; for they only know their Mother. The pictures I have from home are always looked at and kept away from harm.

I sure would like to see our old rooster and cat, for pets are scarce and not allowed. The only pets are horses but they don't figure in that way. One aimed at my digestive organs but missed and kicked me in the hip, but no harm. (The Tribune tells that one in Manly's Battery was kicked in the head and knocked fifteen feet.) The only way we can make a horse understand is to either beat it or to say "Allay," meaning go on.

The French are trying to learn English as hard as we are to learn French, so we get along. The last "Reporter" sure had a bunch of names of the fellows from the Grove and it surprised me, but it shows the Americans are coming to life. The Grove must miss all the noisemakers and night paraders.

July 29, 1918.

Dear Folks: Writing again, that sounds as tho it was many times but its scarcely once a week.

Dear Mother you must send me some pictures of yourself for the only ones I have are over a year old. Imagine a year ago and today! Things surely change quickly. Well in a year more I'll be back and maybe a lot sooner for the Boches are not being treated kindly now.

I met some of our home town boys a couple of days ago and sure was glad. There are about fifteen in our regiment. One likes to meet those who have been parted from best of all.

My health is just grand and I feel as though I were not nearly as old as 21 years. Still I am, and creeping on close to another birthday away

from home. I hope you folks are all well and contented and that your war garden was prosperous as hoped. Say I got one of your letters on canning cherries, etc. and you had nothing on me for I was eating them while I read your letter—just as though they came from my own Mother. "Christmas Dinner in Berlin—or at Home" is our motto! (Very good Eddie.) I must finish or Mr. Censor will lay this aside to rest his eyes as he has too much ahead now. July 6, 1918

Dear Folks: As you will notice this letter is written in pencil. Ink is very far away and haven't time to get it so rather than not send any I'll do this way.

We had a good time on the 4th, the Colonel being the one who entertained. Races and ball games featured the day. The Second Battalion won from us. At evening we had wrestling and boxing and comedies. I saw a real pretty souvenir on the 4th, for Mother and will try to send it.

I will be more consistent writing letters from now on but can't write at will as when at home. There isn't much more than one's health to talk of any more because Mr. Censor is very careful about what is said. If they would just tell us what we can write instead of what we can't—then I'd make this a little lengthy.

Now and then we boys help out the peasants on little odd jobs after we are off duty. Don't forget to send the Reporter once in awhile so we can see what is going on in a civilized town.

There are so many soldiers in here writing that the fewer letters at the same time to any one family the better so please, each one, accept my very best wishes while we are parted.

Some of those cards, clippings, etc. were very good, Mother. You asked about what I did with the big scrapbook you made. As you suggested I left it in Camp Logan for those who follow. Many a fellow beside me enjoyed it.

We got all our letters at once, last week—some stack! All the fellows were so glad to get mail. So am I. So do your duty too!

Love to a waiting mother. Manley (Alderson)

### REUBEN DIENER WRITES BOYS ARE CONGENIAL

Somewhere in France, July 19, 1918

Dear Sister: We received good news today. The Germans have been driven back and many prisoners and machine guns captured. I don't think the Downers Grove boys were in this drive but do not know. They were not in that sector when last I heard. I know that Fritz will get hit hard at the hands of the Downers Grove boys. They are the boys who will tear right in. I regret the fact that I'm not with them. A storm blew up last night and tore off half of the "Y" roof while we were listening to a lecture. It broke up the evenings program but no one was hurt.

July 24. Some days have elapsed since I started to write. Worked Sunday until 8:30 p. m. and Monday the same. We sure have work to do especially when there is a drive on at the front. We even get roused out in the middle of the night when a rush order comes in.

You didn't tell me that Mr. Graves quit at Mertz and Mochels. I saw it in the Reporter that Frank got. Who is there now? Hope the old gent. will take it easy now. He has put in e-

nough time for two lifetimes. We have a good bunch of fellows to work with from all over the U. S. and they are all good sports so you may be sure we have good times and live together like one big family. For several days I have been looking over the engineers in search for Roy Haller and Newton Miller but have failed to locate them. Thought that they might be in this camp because there are a lot here from Vancouver, Wash. Well I guess I better close. With love from Brother Rube (Diener)

### PRIVATE AUTOS IN FRANCE ALL USED FOR WAR WORK

Somewhere in France, July 14, 1918. Dearest Mother:

Today is big French holiday, which you have probably read about in the papers, and we have all day to ourselves.

At last we are at a real aviation camp. We had a very enjoyable and interesting trip on the train from our first camp here, where we only stayed a few days.

We are in active service now and work six days a week, and no more Wednesday and Saturday afternoons off like in the U. S. A. It is real work now and the harder we work the quicker the war will end, and that's what we are over here for. We will have more aeroplane work than we are looking for now, but that suits me fine. I have met a lot of Chicago boys here, that have been here for some time.

The camp is very pretty and is a whole lot better than I expected, and we sleep in wooden barracks, which I like much better than tents, as they are a lot warmer. The food is just as good as when we were up at Camp Greene, which I really did not expect. The American army gets all the white bread as all the other armies have that dark bread. The French think a whole lot of white bread.

The conditions in France certainly show that there is a war going on alright. You don't see a single auto or motorcycle in private use here. I haven't seen one yet that wasn't driven by a military man. So we can consider ourselves well off in the U. S. A.

There are a lot of curious things to see here and I saw a lot of things that I never dreamed about before. The scenery here can't be beat. I'll have to learn to talk French that all there is to it as when you go to town you have a heck of a time trying to tell 'em what you want. I thought Latin was bad, but French is ten times worse. I am getting acquainted with the French now, and once you get on to it, it's very simple. The paper money when it gets up to \$10 bill, is almost as big as a newspaper and a dollar's worth of French money weighs a couple of pounds.

We have hopes of getting some mail next week, as the mail comes here about once a week or so, it depends on when the ships come in. But when it does come in, it will all come in a bunch, and it ought to hold me for a week. But I sure will be glad to get some, as it is almost 2 months since I got the last letter.

Our barracks are right close to a big Y. M. C. A. and they have a piano here too. I wish I would have brought music with me but I never thought I would be able to get at a piano here. I will have to get along without it but some of the boys here have music, so I can borrow some of it when I want to. They also have moving pictures here two or three times a week.

I haven't been to town here yet, but I don't think I will go until next week Sunday as there is a lot to see around here. You ought to have the letter I wrote last week by this time, but it may get there the same time as this one. I won't be able to write as often as I did in the U. S. but please write as often as you can and I will do my best and write you at least once a week. Write me a long letter and let me know how everything is. Was John B. out to our house or Hallenbacks, and how about Irene, did you hear from her lately or what's doing? If you see any of them, tell them that I am getting along fine and am in just the place I wanted to get. I will certainly learn a lot here. It will seem a long time, a month, to wait for an answer but we can't help that any.

We can buy all kinds of things at the Y. M. C. A. real cheap. The only thing that is scarce is candy. But all kinds of smokes are cheap here. There is a fine road running past our barracks and there is no speed limit here, and they sure take advantage of it. There is sure some class to the U. S. army as the officers ride around in Packards and Cadillac 8s.

Well it is getting close to dinner time so I will have to end here for now, with lots of love to all at home, I remain your loving son, Corp. Ed. L. Czechowski.

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### BERTHA DIENER IN TRAINING AS NURSE IN SOUTH

August 14, 1918  
Base Hospital, Camp Wadsworth, S.C.

Dear Folks:

I have been off night duty almost two weeks and have been on the go ever since. I am in a surgical ward and most of the boys have gone thru some operation. Most of them are the nicest kind of lads, when they come out of the anaesthetic you don't hear a murmur out of them. Last week we had an awful sand storm. It blew so you couldn't see in front of you and the trees swayed so their tops nearly touched the ground and yet there was no noisy rushing of the wind. We had another one this afternoon but it was not so bad and it didn't last so long.

We have been drilling three nights a week. We who just came off night duty and a few new nurses belong to the awkward squad. I'll surely twist my heels off doing a "face about" and etc. It tickles the boys so and they come to the drill grounds to watch us. After we get on to things drilling will be a pleasure. Tuesday I had such a surprise, I had just come off duty and was told a lady wanted to see me. It was Mrs. Puffer and the Dr. was with her. They had just been here a few days, coming from Boston. My I was glad to see them. It was so nice of them to hunt me up so soon. I went to the Doctor's tent with them and we had dinner together. Capt. Puffer will be here three weeks more before he goes across but Mrs. Puffer will leave in a week or two.

August 20, Thirty-two nurses left our camp yesterday for overseas. I wasn't fortunate enough to be in that bunch. It surely caused some excitement as it was the largest bunch that ever left here and hardly left enough of us here to run with. Believe me I am kept busy as there is so much office work to do and so many papers to take care of besides reading to do. There is a certain time for everything to be done too. I am enjoying this in spite of my hard work and find it is doing wonders for me. Well, we head nurses were moved into the latter dormitory and have enough single rooms nicely furnished and electric lights. In about two weeks twenty more are going overseas and I hope to be one of them.

Love to all. Sister Bertha.



Those who were at the Tractor demonstration on the Jacob Klein farm last Thursday, saw the simplest to operate, nearest to being fool proof, best of power at draw bar or at belt, of any of the 10-20 Tractors built today. It was not a demonstration of experts handling our Tractor but of those who never handled a Tractor before. Little Henry Pfaff was chief engineer and proved to those who saw him operate the Tractor and 3 bottom plow that it doesn't take an expert to operate it.

The 10-20 Titan takes the place of three men and nine horses in the field and can be operated on less than the wages of one man.

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Primaries, Sept. 11., 1918.

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