

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

THIS IS THE WIN THE WAR SPIRIT

Dear M—

Well, here it is the 29th of August and still I am not back with my Division and when I will appear to be uncertain. I almost hesitate to tell you but at present I am assigned to and performing duties in connection with the Service of the Rear work which I have so often held up to scorn in my letters. But while I am with this organization I am going to do my utmost to make things move and make the way of the lads who come through as pleasant as possible. You see I have a great weakness for the private soldier. I admit it frankly. I like him immensely and am happy to say that wherever I have come in contact with him he seems to like me.

When I reported here the adjutant said something about it being difficult to get me on my way again the same day. One thing led to another and I finally said that if I could not be sent out the next day I would be glad if he would find some temporary duty for me as I disliked being idle. Much to my surprise, the next day received an order assigning me to command of the Headquarters Company of this Replacement Battalion of the 3d Army Corps.

I suppose that does not convey much of an impression to your mind but it means that I am in command of some hundred odd men and just at present and 2nd Lieutenants. The Headquarters Company furnishes working details, men for the Military Police and also forms the working nucleus of the machinery which takes in the stream of men returning from hospitals and elsewhere and returns them to their proper organizations in the 3d Army Corps.

Just at present we are about to move our whole outfit to another town and much to my surprise again found that in the orders I was named to have charge of and be responsible for the entraining and detraining of the Battalion, quite a job, eh? Sept. 6th.

I have had a man's size job since my last letter to you. I think my last letter told you that I had an immediate prospect job of entraining and detraining the Battalion. Well, it was some job all right!

I had a train of 48 cars when I got them altogether ready to move, or 48 wagons as the French call them. Had three flat cars on which were four rolling kitchens, 21 cars of freight, and the rest were for personnel of the Battalion, some eight hundred odd men. The French have a great weakness for dropping off a car here and there, along the road at convenient sidings, and they are terribly slow so it was with a sigh of relief that I finally saw them pull into our destination. We only had to go about 40 kilometers but it took us from 12 noon until about 6 p. m.

The day we moved was a long day for me. I got up at 4:30 a. m. and I got to bed (or rather, to a couple of three hours sleep on some bales in the warehouse) at three o'clock the next morning. We had to unload our rolling kitchens and 21 cars of freight and load the stuff on trucks. Believe me I was a tired boy when we got through.

I am very comfortable situated in a billet and we have very nice Junior Officers' mess of eight officers. I enjoy the work and think the results are, and will be satisfactory to my superiors. Some of the men in the detachment have let me know that they hope I will never be relieved from the command. September 8th.

Well, I am still here in Chelles on the job with the replacement Bat-

talion. Things are beginning to move a little smoother than they did at first. The Major told me yesterday that he was pleased in the improvement in discipline shown by the command. I understand that my division has been doing great work up on the line and I feel a little like a slacker to be back here where I never hear the sound of a gun. What do you think? I know that I am doing, and and more and more will be able to do, good work here. I am learning something every day so that when I do go back to the Line I will be better qualified for whatever position I may be assigned to.

I still have no idea how long I will be here. I may be here several weeks or months and may go out tomorrow. So I am just doing the best I can from day to day and letting the future take care of itself.

As ever,
Harry (Slusser)

RICH HAWKINS AND BOYS OF BATTERY C

Sept. 11, 1918

Mother Mine:

I received your letter of Aug. 5 on Sept. 7, but didn't get a minute to my self to answer. I had a letter I had written to Anna in my pocket which I hadn't mailed. I wrote and told her to tell you I was O. K. so I guess you have already heard by now. Since I wrote to you last I have had good luck. I have met Battery C 149th and believe me I was never happier in my life. They all look fine and they and they nearly broke me to pieces shaking hands and Sam nearly hugged me to death when he saw me. Grant Nash had a couple of pictures of Herbert that Catherine had taken and he gave them to me.

Mother, those boys certainly have seen lots of action and they have the cooties to show for it. I was so glad to meet them and also to see them looking so well.

In a way I have dreaded having Walter enlist, it is a pretty hard grind for such a youngster. But still I am really glad for he is going to make a good little sailor. And he sure chose a good branch of service. Well, that makes three of us in the service. I guess there is no one in Downers Grove who will hang a 4 star service flag in the window and if they do, let George go in the service.

I forgot to tell you that I am writing this letter in Warren Wells' and Ed. McCollum's Mess Hall.

Night before last I towed a "6" cannon into position and one of the boys had to leave his truck up in plain sight of the German trenches because it would not start and as soon as it gets dark I have to go up and get it. I am staying in Co. F. 108th Engineers until dark.

I saw Warren Wells going up the road to look over a ruined town and he isn't back yet and I met Ed. McCollum as he was going out on Detail and he is not here either but I expect both of them will be back before dark and we will have a talk before I leave. They both look fine and are O. K. They saw plenty of action about a month ago and seemed to have liked it.

I thought that I might not like it very well at first when I got up there, but it wasn't so bad. But this certainly is some busy bunch the last couple of weeks.

As usual I have not seen Don yet and I have given up all hopes of seeing him for some time.

I am glad you get our letters and that they cheer you up as I am doing my best to write twice a week but was too busy so it was some time since I wrote last but will try to do better in the future.

As for the Downers Grove boys

who look like they ought to be in the service, I notice there are several names missing on the Honor Roll I had expected to see there and I don't see why the ones who were on once don't get back on the Honor Roll again they are old enough now and anyone would have to be pretty sick or busy not to be some place in the service they could fill. And about all the excuse we can see from over here is yellow than yellow. But by the time the bunch that are not now in get their training it looks like the Big Argument will be over and some of the A. E. F. will be back in civil life. I guess things look promising to you over home as you get more war news than we do.

I have a letter from Donald and he is O. K. just had had his first battle in three weeks.

The Reporters are coming now so you needn't send them.

I will close now with lots of love for all at home.

Rich (Hawkins)

HE SLEEPS IN A REGULAR BED

August 18th, 1918. Somewhere in Italy.

My Dearest Mother:

I suppose you are wondering why I didn't write for so long, but I was traveling for almost a week. I am now down in Sunny Italy. There is only a few of our company here and I happened to be one of the lucky ones to go and wouldn't have missed this trip for a million dollars. We travelled all the way across France through tunnels and over mountains and it couldn't have been prettier. At every large town or city we were allowed to get off the train for a couple of hours and I got some cards from every city we passed through. The best thing of all that I forgot to tell you is that we live in a hotel. I can hardly believe it yet and I could hardly sleep in a good spring bed. We also eat in a large dining room, some class, eh!!! I can hardly realize I am in the army. This hotel is the best one in town. Italy is a very pretty country and I like it much better than I did France, anyway what I have seen of it. I saw many of the cathedrals and monuments that we studied about in school.

We had yesterday and today all to ourselves and to-morrow we are going to start to work in an aeroplane factory. The people in the United States probably would give thousands of dollars to see what I saw and we are getting paid to see it all. I wish some of the boys we left in France could see us eating in a dining room in a hotel. We have three and four course meals and even wine is served. That saying has at last come true, "Join the Army and see the World." Just think of all I would have missed if I had waited a little longer. There isn't a happier bunch of fellows on earth than us Motor Mechanics. But I certainly have lots to tell you when I get back.

I just got back from looking over the city. We met an Italian there who has been in New York City and could talk English and he took us all over and showed us the place. The Italians think the world of us.

It has been quite a while since I got a letter from you and I will be glad to hear from you again. Well, almost supper time now so I will have to finish for this time. What has become of Art. Is he still there or has he sailed yet? I am very anxious to know where he is and how he is getting along I am going to bed early tonight as we start to work to-morrow. I will spend most of my time studying along the line of my work and also the language, but is much harder than French.

Well, will close for this time with best love and good wishes to all at home.

Your loving son,
Eddie (Czechowski)

DON HAWKINS LOCATES CHUMS

Sept. 3, 1918.

My dear Mother:

I am so tired I can hardly sit up but I can't sleep so will write a letter home.

The weather has been fine for the last few weeks and it is getting colder and won't be long before winter is here.

We have moved again since I wrote last but I think this will be permanent home. We are getting rather good at this moving stuff and I think I will start up in business when I get home.

We had a little gas attack this morning but it didn't last long but we had to dash down and put masks on our horses but they didn't believe in masks, so we had quite a time with them and I thought they would go crazy when we took them off. Every afternoon seems like morning to us now because we don't get up until 12:30 but we don't get in to camp until about 6 a. m. Last night we got on the wrong road and it took us about two hours longer to get to camp.

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We stopped about every 15 or 20 minutes last night but I don't know what for although the firing was pretty heavy and not far away. At one time we stopped nearly a half an hour before we started across No Man's Land and two of us were standing near our horses and a fellow came up to us and wanted to know what outfit we were and where we were going. He said he was a Lieutenant and had some machine guns up a little ways and wanted to know if we were National Guard and we told him we were Regulars. We thought he was a spy and he didn't get any information from us.

I just saw Milky Washburn and had a talk with him. I have also heard that the 149th was within one half mile from here and I hope to see some of the fellows soon. Richard will up here soon too. We may all be together yet. Well, it is getting nearly dark and I will close hoping to hear from home soon.

I am as ever your loving son,
Don (Hawkins)

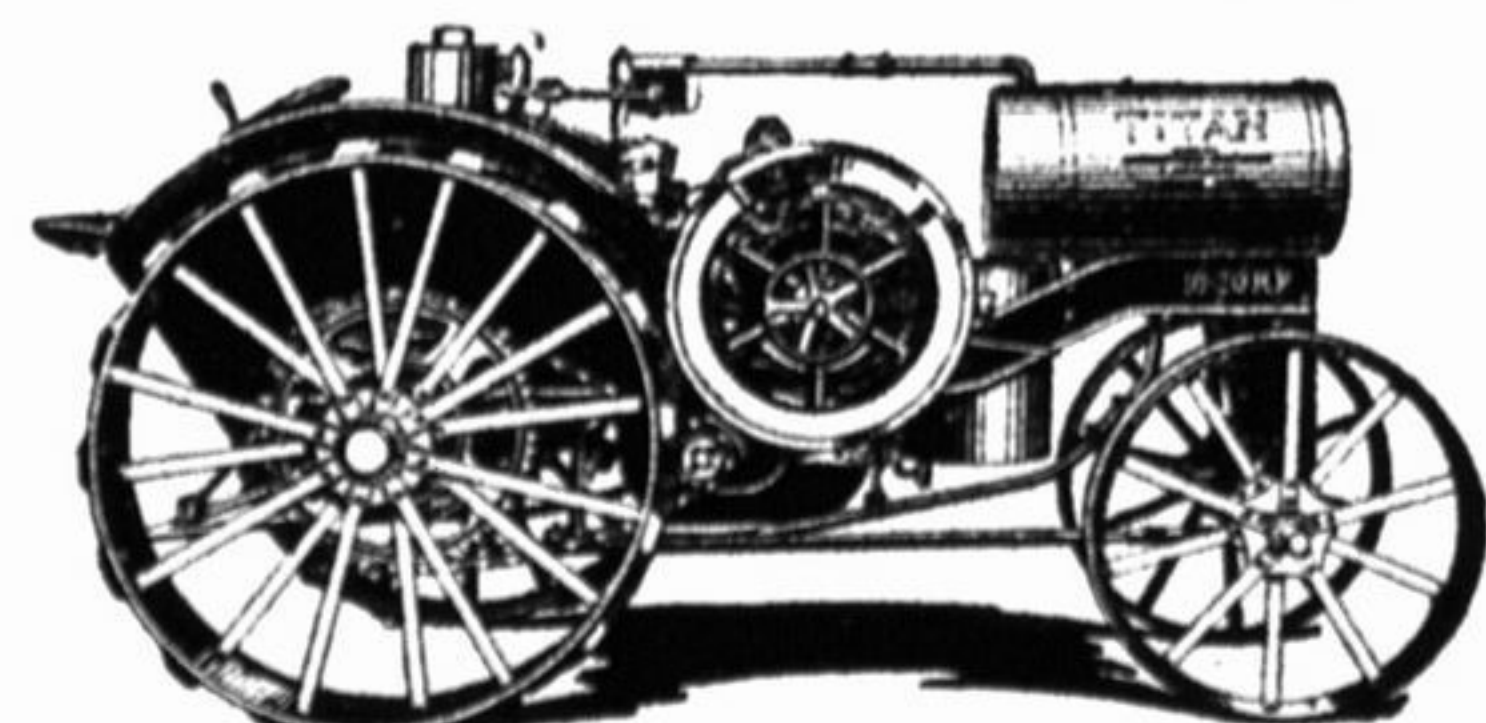
P. S. I have just seen Grant Nash, George Nargney, Gilbert Lacey and Dwight Cox. Stewart Burns and Sam Bertolin have gone to the front so I didn't see them.

JOHNSON LIKES SOLDIER'S LETTERS

Camp Logan, Texas, Oct. 13th, 1918.
Dear Mr. Staats:

I see in the Reporter that you are going to revise the honor roll and want to get everyone's address, etc. before it is printed so will drop you a few lines and let you know mine. I am in the regular army now and not the National as I was classed when I first went in. Am playing in the 57th Infantry Regiment Band and like it real well. We have a fine band and believe we will be made the divisional band. We play two concerts a week here for the boys and play parades and also guard mounts every other week and surely glad to get the Reporter and read the letters from the boys on the other side. They are interesting and some have had quite a bit of experience already. We have a Brig. Gen. now named Guy V. Henry in charge of this camp now and work is progressing more rapidly. The 79th and 80th Infantries have been formed and are a part of the 15th Division. The camp is only about one-fourth full so far. Have had a great many cases of the "Flu" here also but is getting better now.

Yours truly,
Alvin F. Johnson.



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MEN WANTED TRANSPORT CORPS

Major Ned Horton, M. T. C., U. S. A. of Repair Unit No. 304, Fort Sam Houston, Texas has sent to the Reporter office several application blanks to be filled out by parties desiring to be specially inducted into the Motor Transport Corps as Mechanics, stenographers, etc.

The chance for promotion in the newly created Motor Transport Corps is exceedingly bright for the individual who has skill and a real desire to advance himself. Major Horton has had some 11 years experience in the handling of motor transportation and can state without reservation that the opportunities for men in this shop with limited mechanical experience are greater than in any shop it has ever been his pleasure to be associated with.

YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DONE

YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
Get it Over With At Once, Or you
May Not Have a Chance to do
It At All.

Only 48 shopping days remain before December 5, when the last Christ-

mas packages to be mailed must be off. Only thirty shopping days remain in which to select the very particular things that are to go into the soldiers Christmas box, for that must be shipped by November 15.

There will be all the push and rush and frenzy of a hasty German retreat if all the people leave all their shopping as late as they usually leave it. They will buy things that they don't want and nobody will ever use, and waste hours of valuable time that should be turned to war work, for unlike former years, there will be no more clerks and no longer shopping days than there are now, and no larger stocks to select from.

Merchants will have all they can do to observe the rules that have been laid down for Christmas shopping, rules which must be observed if the army and navy are to have the supplies they need. The public must help them. The rules are few and easy to remember. Here they are again:

Buy early in the day.
Buy useful things toys for children are useful.)
Carry packages home.
Send by December 5 all that must go by mail or express.
Avoid giving bulky articles if they must be mailed.
Spread Christmas shopping over October, November and December.