

BOYS GLAD TO SEE AMERICAN GIRL

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE,
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
SOMEWHERE IN SCOTLAND
FEBRUARY 12, 1918.

"It is hard to realize that I am in Scotland and with Bev. It certainly was a long, nasty trip, and I am glad that it is over. It took me two weeks to get here, with all the stops I had to make. In one way I hated to leave France, and I wouldn't except to be with Bev. The work here is just as interesting as in France and there is lots to do. I have charge of this Hut, while Bev goes around to the other huts. All the boys here were glad to see an American girl. They are a nice crowd of boys.

Of course, the boys I was with in France will always be very dear to me and I will watch with interest to see how they get along when they are really in the fight.

We were at Mailly le camp, where the battle of the Marne was fought. We were very near the place where Joffre took his stand and told his "Die but do not retreat." That really was what saved France and the rest of the world. There are hundreds of thousands of graves all over the field, where the men were buried as they fell. The French graves have flags on them. The Germans just have crosses.

The Germans were in the village of Mailly for six days, and of course the damage they did to churches and houses was terrible. The Germans are even worse than we are told that they are. I saw thousands of German prisoners, who all showed a marked hatred of Americans. Some of them were mere boys. We only had to walk a short distance to see the old trenches and many interesting things.

FACE DEATH WITHOUT COMPLAINT.

A French officer gave me his steel helmet that has been through the battle of the Marne and many other big battles. You may be sure that I prize it highly. The French are wonderful and it makes a person's heart ache to see the soldiers. They would come in every few days to the rest camps from the front line trenches and then would go back and others would come in. We never saw the same ones twice. Different batteries came in each time. At times, when they started back, it was all we could do to stand it. They don't look to right or left and their faces all look the same. Tired and worn, but with no thought of giving up. As they marched out, never knowing whether they would come back, tears would roll down my cheeks. They have stood hardship and cold and faced death, without complaint. They are wonderful.

I didn't say much about the cold when we had it, but when I look back I wonder how we stood it. All of our hands and feet were frozen at some time. I had chilblains and my hands were swollen four times their

normal size. My knuckles cracked open and were running sores. I could n't sleep much for a while because most of the time my hands and feet were asleep. When we would arrive at the hut, it would be so cold that it did n't seem possible that we could work, but we did and were all happy and well. I will never forget those three months. The girls were splendid, but the crowd is all changing now, as we only stay three months in a place. One of the girls is going home for a short time while two are now at the Paris headquarters.

AIR RAIDS IN FRANCE

I had to laugh at a portion of one of your letters which said: "Well, one thing, you won't have any air raids in France". I don't believe that I will ever see a moonlight night without thinking of our raids. We got so we paid no attentions to them. I must have given you the impression that we had lots of sugar and similar things. Such was not the case. We did lots of baking with very little. I would make cakes in tins the size of the largest one at Burnside and only use one egg. They cost us a lot at that, but we thought it better for the boys to buy such things than wine. They really preferred the pie and the cake. We only had canned milk, and at such a time as we had to get eggs. We really got so that we could turn out good things with nothing in them. We had apples but never saw any other fruit. Potatoes for a meal were considered a wonderful treat. We never saw any fresh vegetables and never had desert, but had lots of war bread and it is very good, too. We really had enough to eat, but it took several weeks to get used to French cooking. I had to learn to eat rabbits and other things that I never thought I could eat, but it was all great fun and I got fat on it. Things are fine here in Scotland. We have a nice room with a Scotch family and they are so kind and good to us. They bring us tea and cakes in the morning, and every night we get home there is a nice warm fireplace, fire in our room. This morning we got our own breakfast on the fireplace. At noon, we go to another Scotch family for dinner, and such wonderful meals I have never eaten before and I like the Scotch cooking so much.

It is great to see Bev with these boys. They are all crazy about him and he certainly is doing a great work.

GIRLS WRITE EXPERIENCE

Some time before we left, one of the girls suggested that we all write something about the canteen or our life, and not let each other see what we had written. Three of the girls did n't write, but six of us did, and some of the productions were awfully good, especially one called the CANTEEN HUT. I had very little time, as, I believe, I told you. I was working in my off hours at the store, so I wrote mine one morning between jobs. It was hard to bake there, as we only had a couple of feet that we called a kitchen, and the only floor we had was a couple of tops of broken tables.

I had many trisles that morning so I wrote on the "Trials of a Canteen Worker". One of the girls wrote about little Madame Louise, that looked after us at the hotel. She brought our breakfast to us when we had a day off and was so sweet in dozens of other ways. All the pieces are so different that I thought you would enjoy them. You will find copies enclosed. We had a great time meeting one of the girl's rooms and reading them. It must be hard for you to realize that I was an actress. It was great fun and I got so that I really enjoyed it. The boys like to get up things and be in them.