

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO REV. JOS. MC.ILHENNY.

July 13, 1918.

Dear Mr. Mc. Ilhenny;

Just received nine letters in one bunch from Mother and Dad, They said you are waiting patiently for a letter. I am very sorry I have not written sooner, and more often. The case is, that I can't always get the material, and not always have the time.

At present, I have the time and few materials for instance, no ink in my pen, and just my knees and a blanket to lean on, with the help of a signal light battery for a desk, I am making out fairly good.

For a few days past, the big guns have made so much noise that letterswriting has been out of the question. Where we are there is hundreds of guns firing constantly and the noise is terrific, beside, the awful jar. Owing to very bad overhead weather, the planes can not do much work.

Last night they had a mid air battle, neither side an advantage. The Germans are very poor air-shots, sometimes missing by thousands of yards. They use both shrapnel and high explosives, which makes a terrific racket. The French are good shots and often put a barrage around a German Plane, which only looks inches away. I have seen several of the, and also observation balloons brought down in flames. I hope all this stuff will get to you as the censor often thinks different than I do, so he merely inks it out. I have often heard a good deal about Flanders Mud, I am beginning to understand its truth. For the past three days we have had incessant rains, which have turned the trenches, in some parts, to creeks and the roads to quagmires. Half of France is carried around on the feet.

We are situated in a beautiful spot of France surrounded by huge hills covered with Virgin Forest, and in the Valley wheat fields, ready for the reaper.

It is indeed a peaceful looking scene but far, from its actual look of peace, is an underlying war activity. Instead of my nice clean warm bed at home I now occupy a pallet of straw shared with me by my comrade.

Most of my duties here are; Telegraph Telephone signal lights and flag signaler; Operator sometimes carrying messages from one point of the line to another. Now for the French People, the French Poilus and our

American Sammies, hit it very good, they can just about make themselves known, and they both are cheerful and happy, and seem contented with their lot in life. (Intermission while I eat some bread and jam which my bunkie just brought in) You see, I never can let anything like that slip by.

The French peasants are about the same only the poorer class try to beat us when we buy stuff from them.

There seems to be no scarcity of food stuff for us except chocolate. It is almost impossible to get it outside of an American Y. M. C. A. They do a wonderful work, it is the only place we can buy any eatables, like can fruits, cakes and chocolate, besides tobacco. They generally get a supply in, once every week, which when we get wind of it lasts about 40 minutes.

I have for quite a while looked like a pug as upon coming up to the line I had my hair clipped off till my poll looked like a round silver sun disc. set in a hidden garden.

This precaution is best on account of disease, wounds on the head, making easy treatment and our little constant friends "cooties", they seem to follow us everywhere we go. So far they have let me alone, bless their hearts.

Now as I have a few more letters to write, I must close give my regards to Mr. DeCray and tell him I read Leo Smyths letter, he is well and sends regards to all his church friends. I would be pleased if you would let Miss Fritzingler and my Mother and Dad read this letter, as I think it would interest them. I am very glad to hear about George Lower and hope he will soon be able to go home.

Regards to all
Sincerely,
(signed) Howard

Tell Mother and Dad I am well and happy if you please.
"address" pass it along

Bugler Howard W. Munder
Co. G. 109th Infantry
American Expeditionary Forces

P.S. Tell everybody to write, as letters come only about once a month but are like an extra Sun to us, so cheerful is the news they contain.

Three Sundays ago I took Communion with our Regimental Chaplain.