

CAPT. DRAKE DEPICTS TRIP

Describes Journey of National Guard Unit From Camp Hancock to France

Captain George F. Drake, of the American Expeditionary Forces, in a letter to his wife, Mrs. George P. Drake, 2218 North Fifth street, narrates a number of interesting experiences in the Great World War. He says: "We spent a very pleasant Thanksgiving day. The day was rainy and the evening more so. It was declared an absolute holiday for the men and only the necessary military work was done. About the only thing I had to do was to send the headquarters truck to Hildesheim for rations. We do this every day, regardless of anything else. The men must eat, you know, and we have to make this trip every day as rations are drawn from day to day. In the morning the chaplain held church services in the theater and he preached a very fine sermon. We had an ordinary lunch at 1 o'clock and at 4 o'clock we had our dinner. We had no extras issued and what we had out of the government issue we had to scrape up wherever we could. Captain Ennis, the mess officer, went to Bar-le-Duc for the pig and some other things. "Cauliflower, with milk dressing, roast pork, baked beans, celery hearts, pickles, cheese, sliced onions

and snail, toast and jam, coffee or chocolate, champagne.

"Not such a bad dinner at that, considering that Bar-le-Duc is about forty-five miles away and not much to be bought after you get there and that everything you buy is very high. Over the table we had a wooden chandelier with candles all over the top and candles on the table and a big fire going in the fireplace. So taking everything into consideration we had a very enjoyable Thanksgiving.

"I don't believe I have ever told you all about our trip from Camp Hancock to France, and as the censorship has been lifted somewhat I will try and tell you just where we were at, and about when. We left Camp Hancock, Augusta, Ga., on Sunday afternoon, May 12, 1918, at 3 o'clock, and arrived at Camp Mills, L. I., on Tuesday morning. We left Camp Mills Saturday afternoon, May 18, for pier 60, New York, and boarded the transport ship, which was a British boat and had some 1200 men on board. I might say that from the time we arrived at Camp Mills until we left was nothing but a continual grinding getting the equipment for the men and all day Friday, Friday night and Saturday was some of the busiest times that I ever put in, although on Friday night I did turn the work of issuing stores over to the sergeants and went to New York, where I called you on the telephone. I tried to do it from Hempstead, but I believe everyone in Camp Mills wanted to use the key stations there.

"We sailed from New York at about 11 o'clock Sunday afternoon, May 19. We dropped down the river and then continued on our way for fourteen other transports loaded with soldiers waiting for us. We were the last to join the convoy and we immediately started our journey across the ocean. We were conveyed by an American battleship and English converted cruiser all the way across.

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Reception Tendered the Returning Yanks Pleases Uncle Sam's Doughboys

Arthur G. Black, a soldier from the city, who was among the recent to return to the country from the European front, has written his father, George W. Black, 1940 North street, a letter in which he describes his place across and gives a vivid description of the reception tendered the returning soldiers at New York City. The letter was written on Christmas Day from the ship and is as follows: "I thought I would write to you and let you know that I am well, and hope that you are all the same. It was about a twelve-hour trip through a very beautiful country, England. A lieutenant and myself had a compartment all to ourselves and the men were about eight to the compartment with their equipment which was a little crowded for them but they got along all right. You know all the passenger cars are called carriages, freight cars, vans and so on. The carriage has three or four or five compartments. In all that distance I saw only one grade crossing. The railroad goes either overhead or underneath a road and the entire railroad is fenced in, all of which is a good idea.

"We left Ramsey June 5 and marched to Southampton, a distance of about eight miles. It was a very easy march over fine roads and the Colonel took a scientific trip across the English channel that same evening on the channel boat, Prince George. We were very crowded as the capacity of the boat was 700 and we had 1,295 men, so you see there was not much room left. We received an issue of thirty-nine pounds of cheese and several boxes of crackers for our breakfast the next morning. You can figure out for yourself how much each man got. The English ration is not very liberal.

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ATTENTION Members of BAYARD LODGE No. 150, K. of P. Meeting of Importance THURSDAY EVENING, JAN. 9, 1919 Your Attendance Requested W. A. Sower, G. C. James I. Baker, K. of R. and S.

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"We left Ramsey June 5 and marched to Southampton, a distance of about eight miles. It was a very easy march over fine roads and the Colonel took a scientific trip across the English channel that same evening on the channel boat, Prince George. We were very crowded as the capacity of the boat was 700 and we had 1,295 men, so you see there was not much room left. We received an issue of thirty-nine pounds of cheese and several boxes of crackers for our breakfast the next morning. You can figure out for yourself how much each man got. The English ration is not very liberal.

"We disembarked at LeHarve, France, the morning of June 6. We marched through the city, up a steep hill to another rest camp, up a camp is near the edge of the city and I was able to go in and see the city for about an hour.

"We left LeHarve at 2.30 a. m., June 8, for Camp de Meucen, Vannes, Morbihan. This was an artillery training camp. Here we underwent our training, received our horses and equipment and attended schools. Vannes is a very old city and this part of France is inhabited by the Britons. Their dress is very interesting and very ancient. We had a very interesting trip in this town and the chaplain to Nantes, also to Port Navo, which is a sort of summer resort.

"We arrived at Mezy railroad at 12.30 a. m., August 8, and the first thing we heard the railroad officer say was 'put out those lights.' The airplanes have been busy at the point and only that evening they had dropped a few bombs. You know a railroad or ammunition dump is a 'hot' place for the Jerry to work in.

"We went into camp in the Bois Vent Jean Guillaume or William woods and joined Companies A and B. They had left us at Vannes the day after we arrived and they had been to the front since early in July. This is the place where I received the telegram from General Berry telling me of the arrival of Jean, hence the excitement. We were here until August 12 when we moved a little nearer the front to the Bois Villiers, where the ammunition train got down to real work in hauling the ammunition to the front. The Jerry's dropped bombs all around us while we were here, but we always escaped. I guess because we were in the woods and pretty well camouflaged. You know, camouflage is a great thing over here. Always keeps everything out of sight.

"This camp was not a great way from the sea and I got up to the front pretty often. We left the Bois Villiers on September 13 for the rest period. We arrived at Epernay on the evening of the 13th where we camped for the night, left Epernay September 14 and arrived at Verdun, at Helzel, passing through the Verdun, Francois, arrived at Chaminon, where we were to spend a thirty-day rest period. The men were quartered in the town and headquarters was at the Chateau Troire. Epernay. We did not stay here long on the 18th we were ordered to the Argonne section.

"We left Cheminon on the 18th and camped at Yvornion where we stayed the 19th. We left Yvornion on the 20th and camped near Les Jallets. We were here two days, leaving on the morning of the 22nd for the Bois Chalade, Argonne, about five miles from the German lines. The motor section was about a mile from the horse section, and on the 24th the horse section was shelled and killed eighteen men were killed and 120 horses killed, wounded and evacuated. Some start for them. The motor section also lost three men killed. While at this place and this is the place where his leg broken. Captain Bauch and I were in a dugout. The men were in dugouts on the side of the hill and I was in a trench. We could find. On the morning of September 25 the bombardment began when hundreds of guns began firing and let was a terrible roar for a few days. Something one was killed. It was at this place I had my twenty-three-hour trip in trying to go from the woods to Varennes. The infantry division was relieved on the 10th of October by the artillery brigade and ammunition train was held in reserve. I will not tell of all the things that happened while I was in the Argonne, only our movements. We were in a nice room with a fireplace and it certainly was an agreeable change. While we were at this place a Jerry bombed the town but did no damage. He missed calculations and dropped them on the edge of town. While we were at this place we were detached from the Twenty-eighth Division and attached to corps and called for the Seventy-eighth and Seventy-ninth Divisions. Our artillery and our two liaison companies were ordered to Belgium and we have not seen our two liaison companies since. I understand they were in another bombing raid, having lost seventeen men and forty horses. Major Renninger is also sick and has been evacuated

to the rear and in all probability will go home.

"On October 23 we left Les Isles for a day at 7 p. m. Sailed on the liner, but this place across the ocean the lines were stopped at Beaucampville, where we lived with the rats for a few days. I had to even chase the rats off my bed at night.

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