



ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH THE  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

Armas Evs. <sup>12/24</sup> 1918  
9:30 P.M. Camp Ronde Fontaine,  
Near Verdun, France.

Dear Father and Sisters:-  
This "day before Armas" has been  
one ideal day and evening for  
the occasion. The day has been  
filled with warmth and beaut-  
iful sunshine, such as we  
seldom see now-a-days for the  
continual rain and gloom. About  
an hour ago it started snowing  
beautiful big flakes and now  
the earth is covered with a  
white blanket to the depth of at  
least two inches. Surely this  
day has been made as per the  
Order.

At the rear echelon to-nite  
the theatrical talent of "E" and "F"

Batteries are staging a minstrel show in the  
Y. M. C. A. Hut for the benefit of the boys in the  
130 F. H. Having had a spell of 9 days of pleasure  
and amusement I didn't care much about going  
down.

I remember two-years ago to milk quite well.  
Close of contest at J. W.'s.

We have our mess-hall decorated very attract-  
ively with evergreen, wild red cherries, and  
mistletoe and will also have the Regt. Colours  
among the decorations to-morrow. There is  
certainly fine material in the two flags, value  
\$800.

Am going to send you and J. W. each a  
small cigar box filled with these decorations  
to-morrow. The mistletoe was gathered on that  
undesirable soil which layed between the French  
and German Front-line Trenches, better known  
as "No-Man's-Land" near Haudemont, 15 miles  
south east from "Battle-ton" Verdun.

To-morrow, (Christmas) is my day on duty  
and I will have the honor of serving Cham-  
pagne galore, a big 14 lb. turkey costing \$1.01 per  
lb., or practically a \$15.00 bird, and all the  
usual Christmas dishes.

Our officers and boys from this little  
Camp had a wild-boar drive last Sunday  
but returned without capturing any of the many  
young pigs which are so plentiful here in



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these woods. And deer too, quite often they are seen. Yesterday there were three in camp, but our Col. would not permit us to kill them, as they are protected by the French Game Law.

While writing of deers (dears) might mention the two fair Y. M. C. A. girls who were in camp for dinner last-nite. They too, were fine game, not protected by any "Frog Laws" but instead by a Colonel and Lt. Colonel. Some feed we put on for them. Course after course did I wish in with.

I spent Sunday afternoon visiting the Argonia Bunch. Saw Roy Hall, Geo. Lukens, Chris Jurgens, Merle Phillipi, and Alvin Warlow and I found them all well and "getting by" without doing much duty. We have not heard from Geo. Devin since he left us for the hospital, but think he is no doubt on his way back to the good old U. S. A.

Latest rumor came in to-night from Gen. Pershing's chauffer to the effect that we, the 35th division are to be homeward bound within the next 25 days. Good Xmas news at least.

My old Division, the 89th from Funston are in Germany. From all reports they are having some time. I sure are to be abroad for some time yet, hope we get to go over to Kaiser Bill's.

There are ex-prisoners returning from Germany, natives of Russia, that pass by here daily and often stop for a bit to eat, they are on their way to Verdun to be clothed and sent home. They certainly <sup>speak</sup> well of the "Yank", especially his generosity as to food and clothing.

I received two letters from you last night dated; 20th and 21st of Nov. But my Xmas box is among the 60% which have not arrived yet.



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Speaking from a sanitary point of view, I thought it best to wash out a big woolen sock for to-nite as my box had not arrived, but when I got it washed out this morning the day was so beautiful I decided to wash up all my wardrobe and start out pure the year of 1919.

Gladys, I am enclosing two Masonic Papers which I will be much obliged to you if you will kindly give them to A. A. Cone, who will make the proper disposal of same. You should see my press-  
ing iron, a mess bit filled

with fire rocks and mud. The old adage still holds true; "Necessity is the mother of invention."

Father and Sisters, I have much to be very thankful for this Christmas Eve, altho many miles from home, I am quartered in a cozy little hut and well fed with plenty of the best of food, not out in the cold and wet trenches hungry like so many of us thought we would be only a few months <sup>back</sup>. And, too, that I escaped the wounds and disease, so many of our boys fell victims too this summer and fall, not saying anything about the unfortunate ~~ones~~ lying beneath the sod on these cruel and bloody battle fronts.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I remain

Most truly,

Your son and brother,

Milo A. Mair,

Det. 7, 130 F.A.

Army Forces,