

## A LETTER FROM HAPPY HAGAN

Camp Custer, Mich., Sept. 7, 1918

Dear Friend:

As this is Saturday evening and I am spending the fore part of the evening here (at the Y. M. C. A.) I thought I would drop you a line.

I have not drilled much lately as about three weeks after coming here I was placed on Training Cadre. The Training Cadre consists of 32 soldiers, non-commissioned officers and privates, and they are supposed to help train the new drafts. But last week the company received orders not to have a Training Cadre of men who are capable of going overseas, and instead get these men from Development Battalions who are unfit for oversea duty but could train recruits. So of course I may be transferred next week or maybe may get a new order to keep on Training Cadre.

The company I am in has 80 men in barracks and about 200 in tents and expect to get more next week.

The reason I have not drilled is that we have been so busy looking after the new men; putting up tents, writing up their cards, stating on these cards if married or single, former occupation, last employer, and several other questions about civil life. Also we have to take out cots, mattresses, food, etc. for these men. Then we have to go on other duties as fire guards, room orderlies, kitchen police, etc. The other night I sure had a fine job; had to guard \$1800.00. I would guard for two hours and then another soldier would guard for two hours, and I would sleep two hours, and then guard two hours again, and so on all night along.

Just heard a good speech to-night by Sergeant Major Stuart of the Canadian Army. He sure gave a fine speech. He has been wounded several times, and still says he will be in Berlin when us boys march in. He enlisted in the Canadian Army, Sept. 17th, 1914, and was on the firing line in France in November the same year. He said they did not have any food, guns, machine guns, ammunition or artillery to speak of. In their first battle they lost a great many men as they didn't have the equipment like the Germans had. The Germans had everything a victorious army could have.

After a month on the firing line the Canadians were ready for a big drive. In each battalion there were about 1200 men. This battle was the first time they ever saw gas. After fighting for a long time, they noticed a fog coming toward them, but did not think much about it. When it reached them they began to cough and sneeze, and after it was over the men living could see bodies all around with blood coming out of their mouths. They did not realize they were dead. After they had roll call it was found that there were only 250 left out of the 1200 in his Battalion. In another only one was left, in another five and in still another ten and so on; so you can imagine what gas is. The Canadians did not even have gas masks. He asked if you could blame them for killing the kultural Germans.

He also saw many children from

that deer are protected until 1920.

That the bag limit on chickens is five per day.

That the bag limit on ducks and geese is 15 per day.

That it is illegal to have in possession more than thirty of all game birds combined at one time.

That the penalty for being afield with gun and dog between June 1st and September 16 is severe.

That shooting before sunrise and after sunset is illegal.

That a resident hunting license must be on the person of all hunters while afield. These licenses may be obtained from the county auditors or deputy game wardens.

That the open season for chickens, grouse, snipe, plover, partridges and pheasants is from Sept. 16 to Oct. 16

That the open season for ducks, geese, brant, crane and swan is from Sept. 16 to Dec. 1.

3 to 12 with hands cut off. After inquiring he found that the Germans had done this because the children had stolen bread from them, which in the first place the Germans had stolen from the childrens' parents.

He also told us a few jokes. He was out on guard one night and had to look over the wires around the trenches and after finishing his work he thought he would go over towards the enemy's line and try to kill a German. Crawling along for aways and then walking, all at once a bright light flared up and he jumped into a dugout. After awhile he stuck his head up and not over five feet from him in another dugout was a man which he recognized as a big fat German. He said he never was so scared in all his life. The Germans when sending out a party to see what they run upon, that is to capture stray allies, they always send out at least 30 or more. The allies never send out more than a squad or 8 men and sometimes only one or two men. The sergeant major finally got up courage and made a dive at the German and to his surprise he found the German had been dead three or four days. He said said he had been dead so long he stunk.

He said in the camp one day they tried to find out what was the worse to smell a dead German or a goat. So they put a Frenchman in a dugout with a goat and the Frenchman fainted. Then they put a German in with the goat and the goat fainted. What do you think of that?

Well, I could tell you more of his speech, but it is getting late. You can see from this letter that the Germans sure are a barbarous outfit. A person can hardly realize the truth of his speech but he said it was true every word.

He said the Americans were a fine bunch of soldiers and if they could send a number over by December that the war would soon end. I sure hope he spoke the truth.

This week about 70 or 80 recruits will be sent to Saginaw for the Fair. They are to be trained only four days to show the people at the fair what can be accomplished in camp in such a short time.

H. H. HAGAN.