

### Letter From Sgt. Albert L. Johnson

The following letter from Albert Johnson, now in Germany, will be of interest to many of our readers. The letter was written to Sgt. Johnson's parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Johnson, and was not intended for publication but nevertheless makes very interesting reading.

Germany, Dec. 16th, 1918

Dear Folks:

At last we have went somewhere—this time across the German border. I haven't found out if we may tell where we are but I'll tell you later on if it is allowed. We have been here several days, but have had no postal facilities and therefore I haven't written. I don't know how soon this will be sent. I may write several additions before I finally get rid of this letter.

We waited around several weeks in France before we got out. We came here by rail, coming through Verdun and all the war-torn country north of it. It surely has been a bitter and terrible war. France is not what she once was. All northern France is one mass of ruins. I have seen quite a lot of it before. We did get into some beautiful country along the road occupied by the Germans for four years. They had things in tip-top shape, had sauerkraut factories, iron works, munitions and supplies everywhere. Large areas were planted to cabbage. When we finally came into Germany proper we saw some of the most beautiful country I have ever seen. The wine district of Germany with its thousands of vine-yards is surely great. We are about 50 kilometers from Trives and some 80-90 from Coblenz. We are now in a small German town of 6-7000 on the Moselle river, called Traben Trabar. It is quite a place for bathing—mineral water—and for tourists I imagine. There are only about 4-500 American troops here and no camp of any kind near. We are still on a siding loaded on a train awaiting orders we hear to go to the large city of Coblenz. We have been here nearly a week. We have the freedom of the town and I have been surprised many times. We can buy most anything except eats. The stores are very neat and very much like ours. Everything is spick and span. When Americans come in the clerks just overdo themselves to wait on them. I came into a store yesterday and no less than three clerks left their German customers to wait on me. The prices are very reasonable on everything but foods, cigars range from 6 cents to 15 cents. Paper is cheap. The post cards, toilet articles, etc., are all cheap. Germany money now is way down. I got 140 marks for a \$20 bill where in times of peace I would only get 80. French money is worth 135 marks for 100 francs where before the war it would bring only 80. In the stores they'll take paper money sooner than silver if it's French. I can't understand that. That doesn't seem right. Everything here is iron. Their gold and silver money is off the market. Their pfennings are all iron. Jewelry is all iron or silver or gold plate, very little gold plate even. Also little silver. Much jewelry is iron and enamel.

Coblenz, Germany, Dec. 29

Dear Folks:

This is the second time I start this letter. We went to Coblenz and are now in that city, operating as a hospital. We have a beautiful location right on the banks of the Rhine River. I can see it from my window now—not two hundred feet away.

We are located in a one-time girls' seminary which the Germans have used as a hospital during the war. We have about 500 beds, all in one building. Several of us are also living on the fourth floor. Three of us have a very neat room, steam heat, electric light and all complete. We have the best quarters we have had since I have been in the army. It certainly is great to get up in a nice warm room, turn on the light, and wash, etc., all in the best way imaginable. I fear we'll be spoiled for living in "pup tents," or tents of any kind, slopping through mud to get anywhere, etc. This is sure fine, but—I'd much rather get back to the good U. S. A.

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