

In Training Camps

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I have been here four weeks to-day. I am now assigned to Evacuation Hospital No. 4, and it is with this unit I will be going "over there." There are about 200 men in our unit. We are to be located 10-15 miles back of the trenches and care for the sick and wounded while they are being shipped to the large base hospitals further back. Only the necessary surgery and dressing will be done by our unit. There are 16 officers (that means doctors) in our organization. There are to be 28 sergeants. At present I have been promoted to corporal, the lowest non-commissioned officer, receiving my warrant from the Federal Government last Friday. We have only five sergeants with us yet and 28 are wanted so I hope to receive that warrant shortly. I understand we are under orders now to leave for Hoboken, N. J. on the 15th, next Saturday. Don't know any more about it. We are a new organization and are badly needed so we'll likely go over very soon. We drill daily about three hours and get lectures 4-5 hours. I enjoy the work thoroughly and surely am glad I am with this department. I see a chance to do some real good for our men, and doing my bit at the same time. The mortality in the medical units (outside of the base hospitals) is higher than any other branch of the service but they are doing a big and necessary work and that's all we need to know. We surely have a thousand things to learn. Most of us here are either High School or College graduates. That's unusual for any army unit. The big majority are very nice men, splendid fellows, ready to do their bit and hoping this bloody carnage may soon cease. Our officers too are men of high calibre and of high standing in the medical world. All in all a splendid group of men to be working with.

We live in tents, six men to a tent and sleep on steel beds with a straw tick under us and three wool blankets to cover us. Also have overcoats and ponchos (raincoats or capes) to help in very severe weather. Have a Sibly stove (cone-shaped) in each tent and split our own wood. We have been very comfortable tho it's mighty raw and cold at 5:30 a. m. Now we get up at 6:00, breakfast at 6:30, dinner, 11:45 and supper at 4:45. Meantime drill and lectures. After supper we are free—usually writing letters. Have to have lights out by 9:30 tho we can stay out, by asking permission, until 6:00 a. m. Our food is very good considering conditions generally. Of course we miss our cream and sugar, our china and napkins, but aluminum dishes do very well. Hot stew, black coffee, pudding (usually rice), beans, bread and sauce, hit the right spot also. For Sunday dinner e. g. to-day we had chicken (stewed) with spuds and gravy, creamed peas, chocolate pudding, bread and coffee and oh, yes, butter. We seldom get butter.

Last night I was down to Chattanooga and actually forgot to butter my bread—never noticed the absence of what I used to think a necessity. By the way, I ate so much at a restaurant in the city that my soldier companions were almost shocked. No, I wasn't starved. We always get all we want but I just felt like eating until I wanted to quit for a change, and at a real table, too.

I fear this letter is becoming so long that it will be tedious. Hope it finds all my friends and neighbors well. Can but say I am glad I enlisted. Uncle Sam needs men to win peace. We young men of no obligations owe it to our country. Tho of course military life is severe it is not unfair. Every man who tries gets credit for trying. Tho this war last but another day or even two years (which I think it will) I feel I have done the absolutely right thing.

We are having a cold snap now—zero weather for a couple of days. But it is nearly Christmas. Suppose you have several inches of snow up there.

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with the sincere hope that another year will bring peace to the world again.

I am your friend,
ALBERT I. JOHNSON

Governor Frazier Writes

(Concluded from first page)

Nature has endowed us with the facilities that make for good roads and the coming of the automobile has awakened the public interest and created a demand for better highways. During the summer months grading crews are seen at work in every section of the state, and there is a great improvement of late years in the manner in which the work is done. Road building under state supervision is becoming a science.

The progressiveness of our farmers is evidenced by the interest manifested in all movements tending to organize these creators of wealth. There are farmers' elevators, stores, creameries and lumber yards, many of which are run on a co-operative plan, thus insuring a fair deal to customer as well as to stockholder.

Another thing worthy of attention is the progressiveness of our merchants. In many small towns a line of goods is carried that would do credit to the larger city stores. The time worn expression "sleepy little village" does not apply in North Dakota. Stores and other places of business are open early and late, ever on the alert to look after business when it comes, and everyone, from delivery boy to proprietor, is always ready to help out in person whenever needed.

No statement regarding our beloved state would be complete without mention being made of our church privileges. Here are churches of every denomination and the stranger may be welcomed and taken into the church of his own faith in almost every community.