

"Tony" Peterson Writes from
Nordhofen, Germany

The following paragraphs are taken from a letter from Anton Peterson to his sister, Mrs. Asher Anderson:

I received your letter of Feb. 24, and was glad to learn that everybody was in good health.

Chester Wallum was lucky to get home so soon. You seem to think I am in the 42nd Division. I am not. I am in the 1st Division which is a regular army division, but I wish now that I was in the 42nd Division as they are going home soon.

Will write a little about my experiences while here:

My first experience in going over the top was in the Soissons drive. We went over on July 18th; here the Germans had lots of machine guns and artillery, and our casualties were quite heavy. The third day, I was wounded while talking to a runner out of the 16th Inf. He was killed. I returned from the hospital two days before the St. Mehiel drive. Here we met with slight resistance, but we captured lots of prisoners, supplies and guns and ammunition. Here we were given wine to drink from re-captured French civilians.

Our next drive was in the Argonne. Here both sides lost very heavily in taking Hill 240. It did not take much more than an hour, but there were lots of the Fargo boys who fell here. I helped carry a printer from Hunter, N. D., a distance of six kilometres after he had been wounded, but he died just as we got him to the dressing station. During this drive I saw wounded soldiers, beg for help and some would beg to be killed. During a drive, chow is always short and I have drunk coffee from German canteens and ate their reserve rations.

Our next drive was the Meuse. Resistance was weak and we could not keep up with the fleeing Germans. This was in the first part of November and on the 11th the armistice was signed. We left for the rear on the 9th and on the day of the 11th everybody was anxious to hear those blame guns stop shooting, but it took till the 12th before word could be gotten to all the guns.

I must mention one experience in the trenches last winter. We were in them two months and it rained and snowed every day. During the day we would work on the trenches to get the water out of them and at night we had to stand post. Fritz would throw over a few shells every night and fill up our trenches. The next day we would have to wade around in the mud knee-deep to try and get some outfit.

When we were relieved in March and got back of the lines about twenty miles it sure seemed nice. Here there was a Y. M. C. A. and a picture machine. My weight when we struck this town was not 140 pounds, but we stayed here six weeks and I got back to normal weight again.

We left Verdun about November 15th, 1918, and started to hike towards Germany. We went through Luxemburg, and then we followed the Moselle river to Coblenz. Now we are stationed about thirty miles from Coblenz. Each family has to take in from two to eight soldiers. In the room I stay there are eight of us. We eat and sleep good now.

Now that everything is over let us pray the Lord will help the rulers of these nations who are in Paris, and give them the strength to speak the words that will unite the world in everlasting peace.

This country is not as wet as France. The soil is rich and the farmers do all their work with their milch cows. The man who owns a team of horses and a covered rig is considered a millionaire.

ANTON PETERSON