

“Somewhere in England”

247 Aero Squadron,
c/o United States Air Service,
35 Eaton Place,
London, S. W., #1, Eng.

April 14, 1918.

Dear brother Charles:

Since I left the States, I haven't written to you, so here goes.

In my letters to all at home I wrote of our travels, our ocean voyage, and many things of my experience since arriving in old “Blighty.” I told of the scenery, the picturesque and quaint, old-fashioned buildings, and about my duties at the aviation school. So, if you will read those letters you can get all of that.

I am still at the same place and am going to school every day, excepting when we get half a day off.

Yesterday, Saturday, I had the afternoon and today, I have the same period to myself.

You may wonder how it is that we work on Sundays and I'll explain.

On Sundays, of course, a great many people go visiting from town to town and consequently, if the British soldiers all had that day off, they would be going home too or visiting to another town. So, instead of getting Sundays, they get every other Thursday to go home in; and then, at least, one half day and sometimes, two half days every week to give them a chance to clean up and rest.

Last week I was on police duty for two days and the rest of the time I worked at the shops sewing the linen fabric on to the wings or planes and two days in the “dope shop” “doping” the fabric. One-half of a day, yesterday forenoon, one of the English corporals of the A. R. S. (Aviation repair section) showed me how to measure and cut the fabric for a “fūsiläge” covering. (The fūsiläge of an aeroplane is the body, as it were, from the planes in front, to the tail-fins)

I did the sewing and, tape binding on the sewing-machine. It is a “Singer” something like the old one mamma has, but a later type-no drophead.

I like it fine and, believe me I made the old “Singer” sing.

You know, I always did like any work wherein I could go right ahead and take the lead, seeing that I was making a headway. But I never did like a job in which I had to follow without being able to plan it for myself.

So, Army life has given me a new interest and, each day I await, with aridity, the time for me to “knock-on again.

Of course, I don't object to an occasional half-day off, for then, I have the chance to do so many little things of my own personal interest.

Sometimes I have work to do for some of the boys. The other day I shortened a fellows rain-coat and mended his leggings and today, I am going to sew on some “cheverons” for one of the sergeants and mend a barracks-bag.

I haven't accepted a cent for my services and do it only for an accommodation. However, if anyone throws any money at me, why, I'll take it. ha-ha! There is one kid in the squadron who makes a business of it.

The Y. M. C. A. is doing more for the “boys” than any other organization for, everywhere that we have been, so far, there was a “Y.” and we spend all of our holidays and evenings there, reading, writing, talking, smoking, or playing games and playing music & singing.

There is also a counter called a “canteen” where we can buy little articles we need and cakes & cookies or candy to eat. To drink we can get soda water, cocoa or coffee, so we have it pretty nice inside by the fire and out of the wet.

The boys are playing the piano now and very often in the evening we have real music. We have an expert violinist and three others play the banjo, guitar and mandolin, respectively, _ _ _ _ , 4 of the “247.”

If I told you all that I know I would be court-martialed-ha-ha-so I will conclude by asking a few questions.

How are you making it at school, old top, are you going to pass and do you continue to be the same good boy?

Write to me right now and tell me — everything.

I am getting fat and feel happy and contented, and am in no danger-don't worry.

Love & regards to all, Henry.

