

France, July 4, 1919.

Dear Miss Douglas:-

I rec'd your very interesting letter dated May 28 with pleasure and as I have plenty of time I will scratch off a few lines in answer. We are back quite a distance from the firing line now taking a rest. It seems nice to be out of the immediate vicinity of a line of batteries and the range of Fritz's guns. The sound is so deafening at times that sleep is impossible, even after a hard day's work.

As our battalion is no longer an infantry batt. I, of course take no part in Hun-killing, but have seen them lying on the battlefield by the dozens. Our duty lies in building railways towards the line. Even that is hot enough when Fritz's observers locate us and communicate with his batteries. Our casualties tho have been comparatively light.



We have plenty of good food as a rule and plenty of clothes, better in fact than I expected here at the front. One sees no visible signs of food shortage altho none is allowed to go to waste.

We came over here the latter part of April and have had excellent weather all thru. The rainy season is on now but the roads dry up in a very short time. The fields are all green and some of the early grains are about to start ripening. One has to laugh to see the farmers at work here, very seldom more than one horse to one implement. Hay and grain is all cut and put up by hand. Not a bit of ground is wasted, Every odd piece is put into spuds or mangels.

I have been thru some of the beleaguered towns and in some of them most of the buildings have been levelled to the ground. Saw what had once been large farm buildings and had I not seen some bricks lying about I would not have known that buildings ever stood there. So much for the destruction and havoc of war!



Perhaps I am optimistic but I think peace will have been declared before the middle of September. With Russia's new offensive and the States to help I think the outlook is bright. Had quite a time in the States a year ago to-day. Was ~~down~~ and raised there and of course lots on her help.

Well, those dreaded exams! How did you pull thru the ordeal? Hope you passed with a high mark. The girls had just started when last they wrote me. I was never afraid of exams. Not that I claim to be a brilliant scholar but I never allowed myself to worry about them, lose or win. How's your potato patch coming? Every little bit helps, as the saying goes, and it certainly holds good in regard to gardening in these times.

Very high praise for the cadets of your town. Well-deserved praise like that will make them dig in and drill "to beat the band."

I think you underrate yourself. With the same conditions and chances I fail to see why our Canadian



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girls and women would <sup>do</sup> less than those in England. Many I think are doing as much but make less "noise" in doing it. Much credit is due both.

Sent home ~~some~~ some time ago for some of my pictures taken in civilian clothes about two years ago. If they come I'll send you one, and will look for one of you. Perhaps we'll never see each other but no harm need come from the exchanging of photos. In time to come I will look back to this correspondence with pleasure. You will have done something for your country in that. A soldier's face always brightens when he gets a letter, and I got four besides yours that day. I consider myself lucky in getting on an average one a day. Had my picture taken here in uniform quite a while ago but, well, the less said about the photographer the better.

This leaves me well and hope it finds you likewise.

Sincerely  
R. Lightizer.

P.S. Instead of Army, P.O. London put  
B.E.F. France.